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NO. 7206 SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1988 SHABAN 8, 1408 AH 20 PAGES 150 FILLS

Reagan warns against strike on missiles

Israel 'planning' attack on Saudis

WASHINGTON, March 25, (Agencies): US intelligence officials have monitored pinpoint bombing practice runs by Israeli jet fighters, prompting concern that Israel may launch pre-emptive air raids against Saudi Arabia's new medium range missile batteries, the Washington Post reported today.

Meanwhile, President Reagan warned Israel today against a pre-emptive strike against Chinese-built missiles bought by Saudi Arabia.

Response

Reagan made the comment in response to a question about the Washington Post report that Israel might be considering air strikes against the missiles.

The Post, noting Israeli warnings Israel may bomb new Saudi batteries of Chinese-made CSS-2 ground-to-ground missiles, cited concern by unidentified State Department officials that the jet fighter practice means more than routine Air Force drill.

The Post said Saudi Arabia has expressed its anxiety to the United States about the potential Israeli threat to its missile batteries and warned it will retaliate against any Israeli air raids by

launching any surviving missiles at Israel.

The Israelis have been conducting such pinpoint air raids on Palestinian targets in Lebanon in recent days, which the Post says could also explain the unusual exercises, the Post said.

Intensity

The Israeli Air Force bombing drills, of unusual intensity, have been picked up by US intelligence agencies monitoring the Middle East with satellite photography and other detection techniques, the Post said.

It added Israel has been conducting unusually intensive low-level bombing practice runs.

Additionally, the satellites have detected Saudi construction of shelters for their new missiles, which the Arab state's officials claim they need to counter growing missile threats from Iran.

With a range of 1,500 miles (2,400 km), the missiles could as readily hit Tehran as any target in Israel.

Inability

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said earlier the United States had no evidence Israel was planning air strikes against the missiles.

"We don't have any indication of any specific action," Fitzwater told reporters.

But he said Washington was urging "calm and consideration on both sides."

Saudi Arabia's purchase of the Chinese missiles stemmed from its fear of Iran and its inability to buy a US missile, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy said.

He added Washington had urged Israel not to take any action against the missiles.

He said in line with its customary policy, Israel had given no commitments. But another State Department official said the United States felt "comfortable" with the Israeli stance.

China's sale of its nuclear-capable missiles was disclosed last week, provoking State Department expressions of concern about the regional proliferation of such weapons.

Murphy told a congressional hearing the Saudi move to buy the Chinese missile probably went back two years when the Saudis regarded the Iranian threat as "particularly acute" because Iran was known to possess Soviet Scud missiles.

"They felt naked," he said. Murphy said there had been great concern in Washington about the possibility the missiles would have nuclear warheads but both countries had given assurances "at the highest level categorically" that the missiles would be conventionally armed.

He said the Saudis, fearful of Iranian missiles, had asked the United States for the Lance ground-to-ground missile "and we were not prepared to sell. They went elsewhere I regret it."

In talks with Israel "we have

urged that there be no action taken," Murphy said.

"We never get a commitment on such pre-emptive action... in absolute terms," he said, adding Israel was deeply concerned about the sale.

In Cairo, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said yesterday he had urged Israel to intervene with Saudi Arabia in the row over Saudi Arabia's purchase of the missiles.

"The urgent message to US President Reagan dealt with the recent Israeli threat against Saudi Arabia," Mubarak said in remarks carried by Egypt's Middle East News Agency (Mena).

Threat

Mubarak earlier attacked Israeli Premier Yitzhak Shamir over the threat to Saudi Arabia.

"Will Shamir act as a guardian for all states? Does he want other states to seek previous permission from him before buying arms?" Mubarak asked in unprecedented criticism of the Israeli leader.

Mubarak said an Israeli attack on Saudi Arabia would destroy peace prospects in the Middle East.

"Any aggression on Saudi Arabia constitutes a very serious development which could blow up peace" in the region, he said.

Mubarak also said Israel has no right to complain about Saudi Arabia's acquisition of the missiles because the Jewish state has a secret nuclear weapons programme.



US seamen bring an armed power-boat alongside the USS Reuben James which they found unmanned in the Strait of Hormuz on Thursday (See story page 4). (Reuter wirephoto)

53 Iranians die in Iraqi blitz

MANAMA, March 25, (Agencies): Iraqi warplanes attacked two tankers off the Iranian coast and bombed several cities in western Iran, killing at least 53 people and wounding several, reports from Tehran and Baghdad said today.

Tehran Radio said 53 civilians died when Iraqi jets roared over five cities in western Iran, spewing bombs that demolished several houses.

A military spokesman in Baghdad confirmed Iraqi planes carried out the bombings and said Iraqi jets also hit a "large naval target" near Iran's shores last night.

Iraq said it shot down four Iranian planes today while its Air Force destroyed four helicopter gunships on the ground.

Tehran radio said four Iraqi jets were shot down over the battle zone while three more were downed elsewhere in Iran.

The Iraqi bombings followed reports from Baghdad that a total of 13 people died and 68 were wounded when two Iranian missiles plummeted into the Iraqi capital yesterday, one late at night.

Iran kept up pressure on a military base near the northern Iraqi town of Sayed Sadeq. The official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) said Iranian warplanes pounded Iraqi troop positions.

The official Iraqi News Agency (INA) said the southern port of Basra was continuously bombed by Iranian artillery and rockets last night and this morning.

Baghdad vowed to continue its

OIC reaffirms support for Palestinians

AMMAN, March 25, (Agencies): Muslim countries today reaffirmed their backing for Palestinian protesters in Israeli-occupied lands and called on Iran to accept calls for a ceasefire in the Gulf war.

Foreign ministers of the Organisation of Islamic Conference, ending a five-day meeting, also denounced "terrorism" by Iranian rioters in Makkah last year and backed Saudi Arabia's measures to control it.

Iran's chair was empty as the ministers criticised it, emphasising Tehran's isolation after its five-man delegation stormed out of the gathering yesterday and flew home.

The 46-member OIC also welcomed Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's offer to pull troops out of Afghanistan but called for it to be implemented immediately.

Guarantee

It asked non-Islamic countries with Muslim populations, such as Bulgaria, to take steps to guarantee the rights of the minorities. But it did not give additional recognition to Muslim rebels from the Philippines who are fighting the Manila government.

Jordanian Foreign Minister Taher Masri, who chaired the final session of the gathering, said the conference "decided to support the uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip."

But Masri, acting also as spokesman for the conference in a briefing for reporters, did not give specifics of what form such aid would take.

Masri said the conference agreed to "make extensive efforts to force the United Nations to take the necessary measures to force Iran to accept" UN Security Council resolution 598, which calls for a ceasefire and return to international borders.

The leader of the Iranian delegation, Mohammed Ali Taskhiri, said yesterday that the conference "is taking place only to serve the interests of a certain country," meaning Iraq.

A final resolution approved by the ministers "welcomed Iraq's decision" to accept resolution 598. Iraq has not ceased fire, but unlike Iran, it has announced it will do so if the other side does.

Iran has not rejected the resolution outright, but has criticised it for failing to condemn Iraq as the aggressor.

On the Makkah rioting last year, a conference resolution backed Saudi Arabia "without any reservations" in any measures it felt necessary to control future violence.

The resolution condemned "the acts of terrorism by the Iranian pilgrims in Makkah, which

were against Muslim teachings and threatened the security of the pilgrims."

It also specifically approved the Saudi decision to set limits on the number of pilgrims travelling to Makkah and Medina this year.

Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Saud Al Faisal announced the restrictions earlier, but gave no figures. The Saudis reportedly have said the two holy cities should not take more than 1 million pilgrims at a time.

On Afghanistan, Masri said the conference's decision to welcome Gorbachev's offer to withdraw the 115,000 troops and the demand that it be implemented represented a "balanced" position by the conference.

A delegation of mujahedeen guerrillas attended the conference as observers. Afghanistan's membership in the conference was suspended after Soviet troops invaded the country in 1979.

The Islamic conference said the Soviets should pull out anyway.

The ministers also called for the rights of the estimated 900,000 ethnic Turkish Muslims in Bulgaria to be protected in the face of a campaign to force Muslims there to change their names to Christian ones and preventing them from Muslim worship.

Moves

Nur Misuari, leader of the Philippines' Moro National Liberation Front, attended the conference as an observer, but did not press further on earlier moves toward asking for full membership in the conference.

Masri had earlier told reporters that the MNLF had requested membership, would not have succeeded because it is not a state.

The only entity that belongs to the Islamic conference but is not a state is the Palestine Liberation Organisation. Conference delegates say it is a special case because it represents a people whose territory has been occupied by another power — Israel.

The foreign ministers yesterday elected Niger's Prime Minister Dr Hamid Al Abid as secretary-general of the OIC in place of Pakistan's Sharifuddin Pirzada whose term of office expires this year.

The new OIC secretary-general will take over his assignment on Jan 1, 1989 for four years.

Kuwait's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Saoud Mohammed Al Osaime returned home from Amman today after attending the OIC conference.

Describing the conference as "historic", Osaime said the conferees were well aware of the dangers facing the Islamic nation.

Israeli jets blast Abu Nidal's bases

BEIRUT, March 25, (Reuters): Hundreds of wailing women and fighters loyal to Palestinian leader Abu Nidal buried in Beirut today six teenage girls recruited killed in an Israeli air raid on South Lebanon.

Ambulances bearing the coffin from the southern port of Sidon were mobbed by at least 1,000 gunmen when they arrived at Mar Elias refugee camp in the Syrian-held Muslim West of the city.

Imposed

The six were among eight girls and two men killed in Wednesday's raid, which blasted bases of Abu Nidal's Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC) in hill villages above Sidon.

The planes struck again on Thursday and security sources said five people were killed and five were injured but Palestinian officials imposed a news blackout on damage and casualties.

A senior FRC official, Mansour Hamdan, promised the mourners revenge against Israel and the United States.

"We promise you that the retaliation will not be long in

coming. We shall set light to the ground beneath the feet of the Zionists and we shall not, my brothers, forget that the planes which shelled our camps were American," he said.

Masked friends of the girls joined the cortege as the caskets, draped in the red, green, black and white Palestinian flag, were driven to the martyrs' cemetery of Beirut's Shatila refugee camp. Marchers carried banners and chanted: "Girls, take our regards with you to our young men," a reference to dead Palestinian fighters.

Fainted

Hysterical women ululated and some of the girls' mothers fainted as the corpses, still in bloodstained military fatigues, were removed from the coffins and lowered into the ground.

The faces of some of the girls were burnt, while other bodies were mutilated and brought in pieces.

Thursday's raid destroyed most of the Abu Nidal group's facilities, including ammunition dumps, military centres and a jail, security sources said.

Shultz to meet Americans with PLO links

WASHINGTON, March 25, (Reuters): US Secretary of State George Shultz will meet tomorrow with two leading Americans who are closely involved in Palestinian politics, the State Department said today.

Shultz will see Edward Said and Ibrahim Abu Lughod, who are viewed in Israel as members of the Palestine National Council (PNC), the Palestinian "parliament-in-exile" which is closely tied to the PLO.

The State Department said Shultz and the two men would discuss the US approach to the Middle East peace process. The United States this month launched a new plan to settle the status of Israeli-occupied Palestinian lands.

The Reagan administration is bound by law not to have contacts with the PLO on the grounds that the group has not renounced terrorism.

Meanwhile, the Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara has said Washington promised to twist Israel's arm to force it to accept an international Middle East Peace conference — but the opposite happened.

Gunman throws grenades at policemen

Alitalia pilot injured in Bombay airport shooting

BOMBAY, March 25, (Agencies): An Arabic-speaking gunman shot and wounded an Italian airline pilot before flinging two hand grenades at police in Bombay airport today, police said.

Indian authorities said weapons used by 25-year-old Abbas Mohammad Ali Shahadi indicated he could belong to an international extremist group. Bombay police official Arvind Inamdar told reporters.

"We have alerted Interpol and our contacts abroad," Inamdar, additional city police commissioner, said.

The man first identified himself as an Iranian by the name of Abbas Mohammad Ali Shahadi, but later said he was Lebanese, after authorities doubted his

story because he could only speak Arabic, a police spokesman said.

"He is being interrogated by special branch but his nationality and identity are not known," he said. "He keeps changing his version. We have an interpreter, but so far, nothing has been divulged."

The Press Trust of India said the gunman used an Israeli-made Uz automatic pistol, loaded with 26 bullets.

In New Delhi, an Italian embassy spokesman said the attack was clearly a terrorist attack. "A man who carries guns and grenades at airports is obviously a terrorist," he said.

Police said Shahadi boarded a bus carrying about 15 crew members from the Italian national

airline Alitalia and opened fire with a pistol concealed in a handbag, wounding captain Vittorio Santaniello, 55. The shooting occurred outside the arrivals terminal in Sathar International Airport.

The gun jammed after three or four shots, they said, and Shahadi jumped off the bus and tried to escape, tossing two hand grenades at two off-duty policemen who chased him. The grenades failed to explode. The assailant was overpowered by the policemen near a taxi-cab parking lot adjacent to the airport. A second attacker may have escaped in the confusion.

"Had the pistol not jammed, the assailant would have been

UN Chief condemns Iraq for gas attacks

UNITED NATIONS, March 25, (UPI): UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar today condemned Iraq's use of poison gas against civilians in both Iraq and Iran but still has not decided to send a mission of experts to the area.

Iran has asked Perez de Cuellar to send the experts to investigate Iraq's use of chemical weapons that Iran said killed 5,000 people in the Iraqi town of Halabja and surrounding villages in northeastern Iraq captured by Iran in the latest offensive.

Iranian Ambassador Mohammad Jafar Mahallati said in the absence of such a mission there was little point in holding talks on a political settlement between Iranian and Iraqi emissaries.

Emissary

UN spokesman Francois Giuliani said Iraq is sending an emissary for the talks on April 4-5.

Giuliani read out a statement by Perez de Cuellar that "sadly, there is considerable and most serious evidence in the public domain that chemical weapons have been used by Iraqi forces in the past few days, causing a high number of casualties including civilians in both Iran and Iraq."

Uprising leaders arrested: Israel

RAMALLAH, West Bank, March 25, (Reuters): Israeli troops shot dead two Palestinian uprising leaders and two Israeli civilians were charged with planning armed attacks on Arabs.

Sources at Alia hospital in the West Bank town of Hebron said Wajid Al Fattah, 18, and Khalid Al Marqatani, 20, died and at least 10 people were being treated for gunshot wounds after Palestinian demonstrators clashed with troops in the nearby village of Farquimya. Two Palestinians were killed yesterday.

Army radio reported that troops opened fire in the village after tear gas and rubber bullets failed to disperse a violent night-long demonstration.

Israeli troops converted West Bank schools into detention centres for Arabs arrested in a series of raids, Arab reports said.

Police Minister Haim Bar-Lev said Israel yesterday arrested alleged leaders of the Palestinian uprising as demonstrations erupted in several parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank.

Asked by reporters to confirm that leaders of the uprising had been arrested, Bar-Lev said: "I do confirm this."

He added that those held were alleged to be the authors of the most recent leaflet issued by the shadowy "united national leadership of the uprising."

In Hebron, an Islamic official said Israeli troops detained about 200 inmates, or Muslim religious leaders, in roundups this week.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said most of those held were members of the fundamentalist Islamic Jihad Movement.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, Israeli officials rounded up at least 15 Palestinians overnight, bringing to more than 110 the number of Arabs arrested there in the last four days, the Gaza Lawyer's Association said.

A spokesman at Al Itihad Hospital in Nablus identified the two men killed yesterday as Magid Muhammad Ahmed Sawalneh, 21, and Muhammad Ali Abu Zor, 19.

Killed

The deaths brought the toll of Palestinians killed in the uprising to 107. One Israeli soldier has also died.

The radio also reported that two Israeli civilians have been charged with planning rocket attacks on Arabs.

Moshe Winkor of Rishon-le-Zion near Tel Aviv and Gershon

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آج کے اردو صفحات میں

○ بیرونی میں پاکستان نے اپنا مطالبہ ترک کر دیا

○ عراق نے ایران کے چار جنگی طیارے مار گرائے

○ فلسطین میں ۱۰ سبزی فروش ہلاک کر دیے گئے

○ اسلامی وزرا نے خارجہ کی کانفرنس ختم ہو گئی

○ لاہور نامہ ○ یوسفیات

WEATHER

TEMPERATURE will be above normal with light variable to moderate wind which may freshen at times and some clouds will appear.

State of sea: moderate to rough

High water: 7.30 am, 4.30 pm

Low water: 12.00 am, 11.20 pm

Sunrise: 5.45 am

Sunset: 6.03 pm

Maximum temperature recorded: Kuwait: 38°C 82°F

Ahmedi: 28°C 77°F

Falaka: 26°C 79°F

Minimum temperature expected: Kuwait: 29°C 84°F

Ahmedi: 26°C 79°F

Falaka: 27°C 81°F

Minimum humidity recorded: Kuwait: 12% 34%

Ahmedi: 17°C 63°F

Falaka: 15°C 59°F

Maximum humidity recorded: Kuwait: 56 per cent

Ahmedi: 38 per cent

Falaka: 65 per cent

Maximum humidity expected: Kuwait: 59 per cent

Ahmedi: 69 per cent

Falaka: 75 per cent

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Kremlin sends troops to Armenia ahead of protest

MOSCOW, March 25, (Reuters): Soviet troops have been sent into Yerevan, the capital of Armenia, ahead of a mass demonstration planned for tomorrow, officials said today.

An Armenian Interior Ministry official reached by telephone in Yerevan said helicopters were patrolling over the city.

He was asked to confirm reports from Armenian activists that soldiers had been deployed ahead of the demonstration, called to demand that the Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh be made part of Armenia.

"Yes, but I can't give you any information about this," he replied.

The official, who declined to give his name, said the city appeared "fairly calm."

Banned
Telephone links from Moscow to Yerevan have worked only sporadically for two days and Western reporters have been banned from travelling to the area since late February, when crowds of up to one million demonstrated in Armenia.

Telephone calls to Western reporters from dissident sources in Armenia have also been cut off

since Thursday in an apparent partial communications blackout.

As a result, it was not known whether the Karabakh committee organising the Yerevan protests was proceeding with plans to hold the demonstration on Saturday.

Wishing

New rules issued on Thursday require people wishing to hold a demonstration to apply for permission 10 days in advance. This would make the new action illegal if it takes place.

Press officials in Baku, the Azerbaijani capital, told Reuters similar rules on mass gatherings had been adopted in the republic, Armenia's neighbour in Soviet Transcaucasia.

They also said the Azerbaijani authorities had dissolved an organising committee formed in Nagorno-Karabakh last month. The group, called the Krunk committee, was accused of inciting people to stage anti-socialist mass disturbances.

The Soviet press, meanwhile, published details of a government plan to develop Nagorno-Karabakh, a mountainous enclave populated mainly by ethnic Armenians which has been

under Azerbaijani control since 1923.

The Christian Armenians and Muslim Azerbaijanis share a long history of religious enmity and Kremlin officials admit the Azerbaijani authorities neglected Nagorno-Karabakh.

On February 20, Nagorno-Karabakh's governing council voted to join Armenia and asked Moscow to redraw the borders.

This sparked the Yerevan demonstrations, followed by ethnic bloodshed eight days later in the Azerbaijani city of Sumgait. Officials say 32 died and nearly 200 were injured. Armenians say it was a programme directed against their community.

Organisers of the Yerevan protests called a month-long truce in late February after Kremlin leader Mikhail Gorbachev promised to give their demands his personal consideration.

As the March 26 deadline on the protest moratorium neared, the Kremlin issued a statement on Wednesday condemning "nationalistic and extremist manifestations" and saying it was intolerable for non-official groups to demand border changes.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ritz award

NEW YORK, March 25, (AP): Judges could not decide which of three novelists should get this year's Ritz Paris Hemingway Award, so the \$50,000 prize will be donated to charity, sponsors said yesterday.

The nominees were Nadine Gordimer of South Africa for "a sport of nature," Toni Morrison of the United States for "beloved" and Michael Ondaatje of Canada for "in the skin of a lion." The sponsor said in a news release. None received the required majority vote from the prize jury.

Activist hanged

JOHANNESBURG, March 25, (Reuters): Black activist Michael Lucas, condemned for murdering a bus driver, was hanged in Pretoria central prison at dawn today, officials said.

Lucas was found guilty of shooting a black bus driver during rioting near the eastern town of Oudtshoorn in April 1985. Yesterday, a supreme court rejected an attempt to halt his execution.

Cocaine haul

MADRID, March 25, (Reuters): Spanish police seized 400 kg (900 pounds) of cocaine and arrested 10 people in one of the biggest narcotics hauls in Europe, a police spokeswoman said today.

The spokeswoman declined to give further details, but said police were still rounding up suspected drug traffickers.

Meningitis scare

ASWAN, Egypt, March 25, (Reuters): Doctors are inoculating all 150,000 people of this popular tourist resort after three Sudanese visitors were found to have meningitis, local government officials said today.

Alitalia pilot ...

(Continued from Page 1)

able to get most of the 15 Alitalia crew members," Inambar said. He also said the two grenades were found two days ago in the Saudi Arabian consulate in Bombay.

Motive
Inambar said no passport or identity papers were found on Shahadi who gave police his name but has not revealed his nationality.

"He could be from any country in the Middle East, including Cyprus and Lebanon. Unless we establish his identity, we cannot find the motive behind the shooting," Inambar said.

Santaniello had flown into Bombay on Alitalia flight 1761 from Sydney, Melbourne and Singapore. The flight changes crews in Bombay before proceeding to Rome.

Gephardt looks for 'Michigan miracle'

Bush attacks Jackson

WASHINGTON, March 25, (AP): Vice-President George Bush lashed out at Jesse Jackson for criticising him on civil rights.

The Vice-President said he favoured the basic premise of the bill, but didn't want to go against the President on the matter. Besides, he said, the legislation was flawed. Jackson has scoffed at that, saying Bush lacks leadership.

"Perhaps Rev. Jackson was talking when he should have been listening," Bush reported yesterday. "If he's the nominee, we'll have a chance to discuss civil rights records and I'll lay my record on the ground with anybody."

Sweeping

Gephardt aides said yesterday that without a win this weekend, the Missouri congressman would end his presidential bid and run for re-election to his legislative seat. The filing of seat is on Tuesday.

Bush campaigned in Connecticut, where he was expected to cruise to an easy win in Tuesday's primary. He grew up in the state, and his father was a US senator from Connecticut.

Awarded

Bush suggested Jackson's Democratic rivals were too timid about criticising him. "It's not that I'm afraid to do what some Democrats are afraid to do — go after him," he said.

At a news conference, the Vice President also expressed admiration for former White House aide

Oliver North, who pleaded innocent yesterday in Washington to criminal charges in connection with the Iran-Contra affair.

"I think anybody who sheds his blood for his country and wins a Purple Heart — three of them — and a Silver Star deserves whatever accolades one gets for that kind of stellar heroic performance," he said. The Purple Heart is awarded for being wounded in the service and the Silver Star is for valor.

Bush said he did not expect the arms-for-hostages affair to hurt his campaign.

"The Democrats will be trying to raise it and make an issue out of it," he said, but added: "I don't think anyone has ever implicated me or suggested any wrongdoing."

For the second time this week, a poll suggested Bush would have a tough fight on his hands if he were running against Democrat Michael Dukakis. A CBS-New York Times poll indicated 46 per cent of all registered voters polled favoured Bush and 45 per cent backed Dukakis.

60-day truce pact signed

Guns fall silent in Nicaragua

MANAGUA, Nicaragua, March 25, (AP): Sandinista and Contra guns were silent on the first day of an agreement between the government and the rebels that Nicaraguans pray will bring peace for the first time since 1981.

In three days of negotiations that resulted in agreement on Wednesday night, both sides called it Nicaragua's last chance for peace. The formal, 60-day ceasefire is to begin April 1, but they agreed to extend a truce declared for the talks. The government and the rebels signed the ceasefire agreement on Wednesday.

Nicaragua's Vice-President Sergio Ramirez, in Mexico City to brief Mexican President Miguel De La Madrid on the agreement, told a news conference "direct negotiations with the United States government is more necessary than ever" to ensure a truce in Nicaragua.

Marched

The United States, which had supported the rebels, rejected previous Sandinista calls for direct talks, saying the Nicaraguan government and the rebels must negotiate first.

"Now that we have ... a signed document with the Contras, we are disposed to begin direct negotiations with the United States," Ramirez said.

In Nicaragua, dozens of women marched to Juigalpa yesterday gathered in the city's main Roman Catholic church and "lighted candles to the Virgin Mary" to mark the agreement, a Defence Ministry official said, on condition of anonymity.

Alonso Moreno, who owns a show store and has three nephews in the Army, said: "This is the most important thing that has occurred since 1979 when the Somoza dictatorship was overthrown."

Enrique Bolanos, President of the Private Enterprise Council and staunch critic of the government, called the pact "a miracle."

In Costa Rica, President Oscar Arias said the ceasefire offers "a new and firm hope that all Central Americans can live in peace."

Arias won the 1987 Nobel peace prize for devising the Central American peace agreement that calls for ceasefires in the region's wars.

During the negotiations at Sapo, on the Costa Rican border 90 miles (145 kilometres) south of Managua, President Daniel Ortega made a surprise visit and said it was time "to bury once and for all the military confrontation."

Rebel leader Alfredo Cesar told journalists at the meeting: "It is not just a chance to achieve peace and harmony, but the only chance."

Iran accused of bombing Turkish checkpoint

ANKARA, March 25, (Reuters): Turkey accused Iran today of deliberately bombing the country's main border crossing point with Iraq.

"This attack was done on purpose. The main purpose was to cut trade between Turkey and Iraq. Iranian officials must be very careful not to make further attacks close to Turkey," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

Iranian Ambassador Manoochehr Mottaki was summoned to the Foreign Ministry to receive strongly-worded written and verbal protests yesterday.

The Iranian news agency IRNA reported that the Iranian embassy in Ankara categorically denied that Iranian warplanes had bombed a region near the border between Turkey and Iraq.

Dropped
The Turkish statement said one Iranian warplane dropped five bombs near a populated area on the Turkish side of the Iraqi border zone yesterday, but no casualties were reported.

The blasts broke windows in the Habur border post, causing panic among customs officials and truck drivers, newspapers reported.

Habur, about 240 km (140 miles) west of the nearest point on the Iranian border, is the main transit point for trade between Turkey and Iraq, worth \$2.1 billion in 1987, and for European truck traffic bound for Iraq.

Lebanese 'terrorist' freed in Paris

PARIS, March 25, (UPI): A Lebanese-born man charged with involvement in a 1986 wave of terrorist bombings in Paris that killed 13 people has been released from prison, officials said today amid unconfirmed reports of ongoing negotiations to free French hostages.

Mohamed Mouhajir, about 35, held since March 1987 on criminal association and other terrorism-related charges, was released late yesterday from Fleury-Merogis prison, his lawyer said. The release was ordered by judge Gilles Boulouque, the magistrate investigating the 1986 bombings.

Officials said Mouhajir, a French citizen through marriage, had surrendered his passport and was forbidden to leave the country.

The judge's decision, taken against the recommendations of the Paris Prosecutor's Office, prompted speculation that the government may be engaged in a new effort to free French hostages in Lebanon.

The news agency Agence France Presse cited rumours of an impending trip by Prime Minister Jacques Chirac to Algiers or Damascus. AFP said Jacques Kosciuszko-Morizet, National Secretary of Chirac's RPR (Rally for the Republic) Party, was already in the Syrian capital.

Cancer risk

CHICAGO, March 25, (Reuters): A study of more than 9,000 women has found no link between use of birth control pills early in life and the later development of breast cancer, researchers said yesterday.

The report, published in this week's journal of the American Medical Association, cautioned however that the finding was still preliminary since oral contraceptives have not been on the market long enough for a true puberty-to-old age study.

Uprising leaders arrested

(Continued from Page 1)

Luxemborg of Jerusalem were charged and remanded in custody for illegal possession of weapons including US-made law anti-tank missiles they planned to use in attacks on Arabs, the radio said.

Israeli troops clamped curfews on at least seven towns and Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, sealed off others and declared large areas off-limits to reporters.

Near Hebron, Palestinians attacked an Israeli bus on its way to pick up passengers at the Jewish settlement of Kiryat Arba, beat the driver and then set fire to the empty bus, security sources said.

Rescued

Troops rushed to the scene, rescued the driver and arrested several suspects, the sources said.

Near Hebron's Haras Mosque, troops shot and wounded four Palestinians when a violent demonstration broke out after Friday prayers, Palestinian sources said.

Army radio reported that a Gaza lawyer, Raji Sourani, was placed in administrative detention without trial for six months.

He was the second Gaza lawyer to be jailed without trial, this week in a widening clamp down on human rights campaigners and journalists.

In Hebron, the Palestine Press Service (PPS) said soldiers entered the mosque and arrested about 100 people after disturbances.

Disperse

Clashes were continuing around Alia hospital and several people were injured, the PPS said.

In Ramallah, paramilitary border police threw tear gas grenades to disperse a demonstration by about 50 Muslim women after Friday prayers.

The women chanted "Long live Palestine" and "With our spirit and our blood, we will redeem the martyrs."

In the West Bank town of Jenin, residents reported clashes after Friday prayers and said one person was shot in the leg and taken to a hospital in Nablus.

Because of the ongoing violence in the occupied territories, Monsignor Michel Sabbah, Jerusalem's Roman Catholic bishop, cancelled the annual Palm Sunday procession from the biblical Mount of Olives to Jerusalem's old city.

53 Iranians die in Iraqi blitz

(Continued from Page 1)

be the first step of any settlement. Tehran Radio said three Iraqi Sukhoi-22 jets were shot down by Iranian fighter planes and anti-aircraft fire over western Iraq this afternoon. There was no word on the fate of the pilots.

Iraq said two Iranian missiles hit the capital Baghdad yesterday, one of them smashing into a children's hospital and killing nine civilians and wounding 59 people.

The explosion caused scores of other casualties in the densely-populated area around the hospital, the Iraqi News Agency INA reported.

The sound rocket killed four civilians and injured nine others when it destroyed three houses and damaged other property, a military spokesman said.

Rockets
Iran said it fired four rockets at the Iraqi capital after Iraq launched six missiles in six minutes at Tehran yesterday.

Iran reported 10 deaths, 100 injuries and damage to hospitals and schools in its capital city.

Iran said yesterday its Revolutionary Guards seized more ground in an overnight thrust into the Kurdish mountains of northeast Iraq.

But Iraq denied there had been a new Iranian offensive. It said Tehran's forces had been hard hit by air and artillery attacks.

Top Iranian war spokesman Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said on Thursday Iran had plans for offensives on all fronts.

20 workers killed in Seoul fire

SEOUL, March 25, (UPI): A pre-dawn fire at a garment factory killed 20 young women and seriously injured three early today, police said.

The fire broke out at about 1:40 am in a stairwell between the first two floors, where flammable materials were stacked, police said. The blaze quickly spread upward.

The victims, aged 14 to 25, were trapped in their dormitory, part of the third floor occupied by the Green Hill Co. a garment factory in Anyang, 10 miles (16 km) south of Seoul, police said. The building also housed a bank, a restaurant and a movie house.



Discover
gold

Government Warning: Smoking is a major cause of cancer and diseases of the lungs, heart and arteries.

Demand for Afghan interim government dropped

Pakistan removes major obstacle

WASHINGTON, March 25, (Agencies): Pakistan has removed a major obstacle to a settlement of the war in Afghanistan by withdrawing its demand for formation of an interim government, a senior US official said yesterday.

The Soviet Union, charging Pakistan with bad faith, had refused to complete an agreement for withdrawal of an estimated 115,000 troops from the war-torn country.

Initially, the United States supported the demand of Pakistan, which is negotiating terms of a settlement on behalf of the Afghan rebels, with the Soviet-backed Kabul government through a United Nations

mediator.

But President Reagan's administration subsequently back-pedalled, while pressing its own demand that the Soviets cease their military aid to the Marxist government.

The US official said Pakistan was now willing to have the Red Army retreat even while the UN mediator, Diego Cordovez, consulted with warring factions on formation of a transition government.

"The interim government issue, which has been an obstacle, is now swiftly soluble," he said.

The official, who played a leading role in talks in Washing-

ton this week with Soviet officials, briefed reporters under rules that gave him anonymity.

Secretary of State George Shultz on Wednesday night ruled out any agreement to end the war in Afghanistan unless the Soviet Union suspended military aid to the Kabul government.

He said Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze had rejected the proposal, which would include a suspension in US support for the Afghan resistance.

The moratorium would be in effect during the Soviet pullout and for three additional months. The US official said "it would allow the dust to settle" without

prejudice to US and Soviet claims to back rival factions.

"They didn't feel they could agree to that," Shultz said.

And yet, Shultz said, "those conditions are needed for us to be able to sign as a guarantor" of the Geneva agreement to end the war.

Cordovez said today peace talks on a Soviet troops withdrawal from Afghanistan will continue next week despite a US-Soviet impasse on key issues.

"The talks will go on on Monday," Cordovez told reporters after another season of indirect talks among himself, Afghan Foreign Minister Abdul Wakil and Pakistani negotiator Zain Noorani.

America acting as a mediator

WASHINGTON, March 25, (Kuna): Lebanon's Information Minister Joseph Skaff said here that the US has now shifted its role in Lebanon from a mere "postman" to a true "mediator" in the Lebanese conflict.

The Lebanese politician made his comment following three days of private talks with State Department officials on ways of breaking the stalemate in the Lebanese crisis.

Skaff, who represents Zahleh in the Lebanese Parliament and is a veteran politician and former defence minister, said he was impressed with the revived American interest in bringing about a solution to the Lebanese conflict.

A series of American envoys have recently been shuttling back and forth between Beirut and Damascus in an attempt at bridging the gap between President Amin Gemayel, Syria and members of the Lebanese opposition. Skaff said some progress has been made among the various political parties in Lebanon on the whole controversial question of Lebanese political reform, but he admitted the outcome is not yet clear.

"Much depends on regional developments," Skaff said.

PLO office in UN may remain open

UNITED NATIONS, March 25, (Reuters): The UN mission of the Palestine Liberation Organisation will probably stay open for many weeks, if not months, while a US move to have it closed becomes ensnared in a legal thicket, some UN officials say.

The legal picture grew more complex on Wednesday when 65 American individuals and organisations filed suit in US federal court challenging the constitutionality of the 1987 anti-terrorism law under which the US government is acting.

A number of UN officials said privately the legal action could drag on for many weeks or even

Li opens Chinese congress

PEKING, March 25, (Reuters): China will push ahead with its programme of economic reform but must tackle mounting inflation, acting Premier Li Peng said at the opening of Parliament.

China must carry out its open policy, begun in 1978, and "put reform at the centre of all undertakings and integrate it more closely with economic development," he said.

He also told the 2,900 delegates of the annual meeting of the National People's Congress, assembled in Peking's Great Hall of the People, that China must continue to modernise its defence forces and combine military and civilian production.

China's top leader Deng Xiaoping sat behind Li as the acting premier delivered his 56-page report.

Li recounted China's successes in expanding trade and economic growth over the last five years and stressed the need for "accelerating and deepening reform."

He also praised the policy of speeding growth along China's south coasts, an era that is to serve as the engine of the country's economic development.

But he underlined growing concern among some communist leaders over inflation by saying that rising prices have lowered living standards for some of the

nation's one billion people.

"The outstanding problem in our economic and social life today is the excessive rise in commodity prices," he said.

Retail prices surged 7.2 per cent last year according to official data and economists estimate the actual rise exceeded that level.

"We shall strengthen control over commodity prices," he promised.

Li also hinted at further economic hurdles, saying: "Since China is a developing country that is economically poor and culturally backward ... The reform cannot be carried out in easy economic circumstances."

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Vanunu: 'spy'

Vanunu convicted

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM, March 25, (Reuters): Former nuclear technician Mordechai Vanunu was found guilty of espionage and treason by an Israeli court yesterday for spying on Israel's nuclear secrets over the front pages of a British newspaper.

In a Jerusalem district court closed to public and press, three judges ruled the 34-year-old Israeli collected and passed secret information with the intention of harming state security and aided Israel's enemies in war.

Vanunu, who worked at Israel's top-secret Dimona nuclear reactor for nine years before telling his story to London's Sunday Times in September 1986, faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment at a hearing set for Sunday.

Defence attorney Avigdor Feldman told reporters after Vanunu heard the verdict: "He didn't despair. He received it in an interested manner and he didn't fall apart."

Guilty

The trial and the whole affair was shrouded in military censorship. The only sentence made public from the court's 60-page verdict read: "We decided the defendant is guilty on all three counts."

Feldman said he expected to appeal to the supreme court.

Vanunu was spirited back to Israel 17 months ago to face trial. Most Israelis, haunted by Arab encirclement, had long ago judged him a spy and traitor.

The Sunday Times said a blonde agent for Israel's Mossad secret service lured Vanunu to Italy, promising sex. It said he was then drugged, chained and spirited on a ship to Israel.

The Sunday Times newspaper said it had warned Vanunu of the possible consequences of his revelations.

Hindu conference

KATHMANDU, March 25, (Reuters): King Birendra of Nepal, the world's only Hindu monarch, today opened the World Hindu Conference before an audience of sadhus, fanatics, swamis, saints and Western converts to one of the world's oldest religions.

875 prisoners released to mark Independence Day

Dhaka opposition serves ultimatum

DHAKA, March 25, (Agencies): Bangladesh opposition leaders yesterday gave President Hosain Mohammed Ershad a 15-day ultimatum, asking the former Army general to step down or face violent protests.

Three opposition alliances, which group 20 parties, and the Muslim fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami, held four separate rallies in Dhaka to coincide with the completion of six years of rule by Ershad.

Strike

The day was observed as "black day" by the mainstream opposition.

Ershad, 58, who seized power in a bloodless coup on March 24, 1982 stepped into his seventh year in power, proving himself the most durable ruler in a nation which has seen assassination of two presidents, deposition of four others and at least a dozen failed coups.

Opposition leaders said Thursday they would start an indefinite nationwide general strike and violent street protests, if the government does not step down by April 8.

"Ershad has no right to rule this country," said Begum Khaleda Zia who heads a seven-party alliance. "He usurped power and is perpetuating it with the help of guns," he told a Dhaka rally.

The general secretary of the Awami League Party, Sajada Choudhury, asked the people to start violent protests to topple the government.

"Ershad's six years rule (is) widely marked by rampant corruption, inefficiency and deteriorating law and order situation," she said.

Meanwhile, a political commentator said that the new opposition ultimatum was unlikely to make any impact on

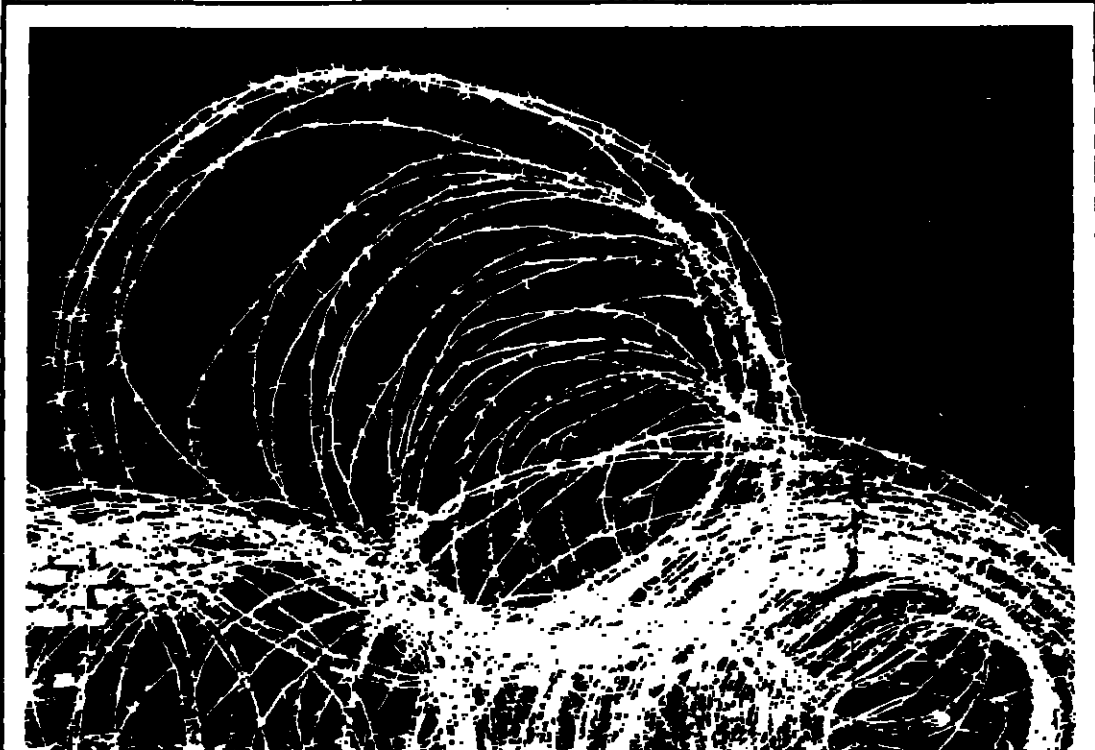
Ershad. "The opposition ultimatum has no new element in it," commentator Kazi Montu said. "In the past, the opposition had issued several such ultimatums without making any serious dent in Ershad's popularity among the rural populace."

Ershad imposed emergency on his nation of 105 million on Nov 27 after the opposition launched a series of marches and strikes to force him out of office.

Ershad dissolved parliament on Dec 6 and ordered new elections.

The election, on March 3, was boycotted by the mainstream opposition who said the polling would not be free and fair with Ershad in power.

The government has ordered the release of 875 prisoners to mark its 17th Independence Day today, the official BSS news agency said.



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Iran sets condition for Waite's release

LONDON, March 25, (AP): Iranian parliament speaker Hashemi Rafsanjani said yesterday Britain must help free Iranian hostages in Lebanon before Iran will intervene on behalf of Waite and another missing Briton, the BBC reported.

At a news conference in Tehran attended by British Broadcasting Corporation correspondent John Simpson, Rafsanjani said Britain must help free a group of Iranians who have been missing in Lebanon since 1982.

Simpson interpreted the Iranian leader's remarks as indicating that Waite and British reporter John McCarthy were alive. They are among 24 foreigners currently missing in Lebanon. The BBC Radio report, broadcast in London, made no mention of non-British Western hostages.

Rafsanjani said at first that he did not know if they were alive or dead. Simpson said in a broadcast from the Iranian capital. But when pressed, he began to talk of the conditions for their release.

Difference Simpson added: "He accepted that there was a clear difference between the one hand Waite, from a religious background and McCarthy, a journalist and, on the other, a spy or a military man."

When Simpson said that the Iranians were almost certainly dead, Rafsanjani said someone should show Iran the bodies.

The press conference took place during an Iraqi air raid during which three missiles fell on the city including one that Simpson saw later beside a children's clinic.

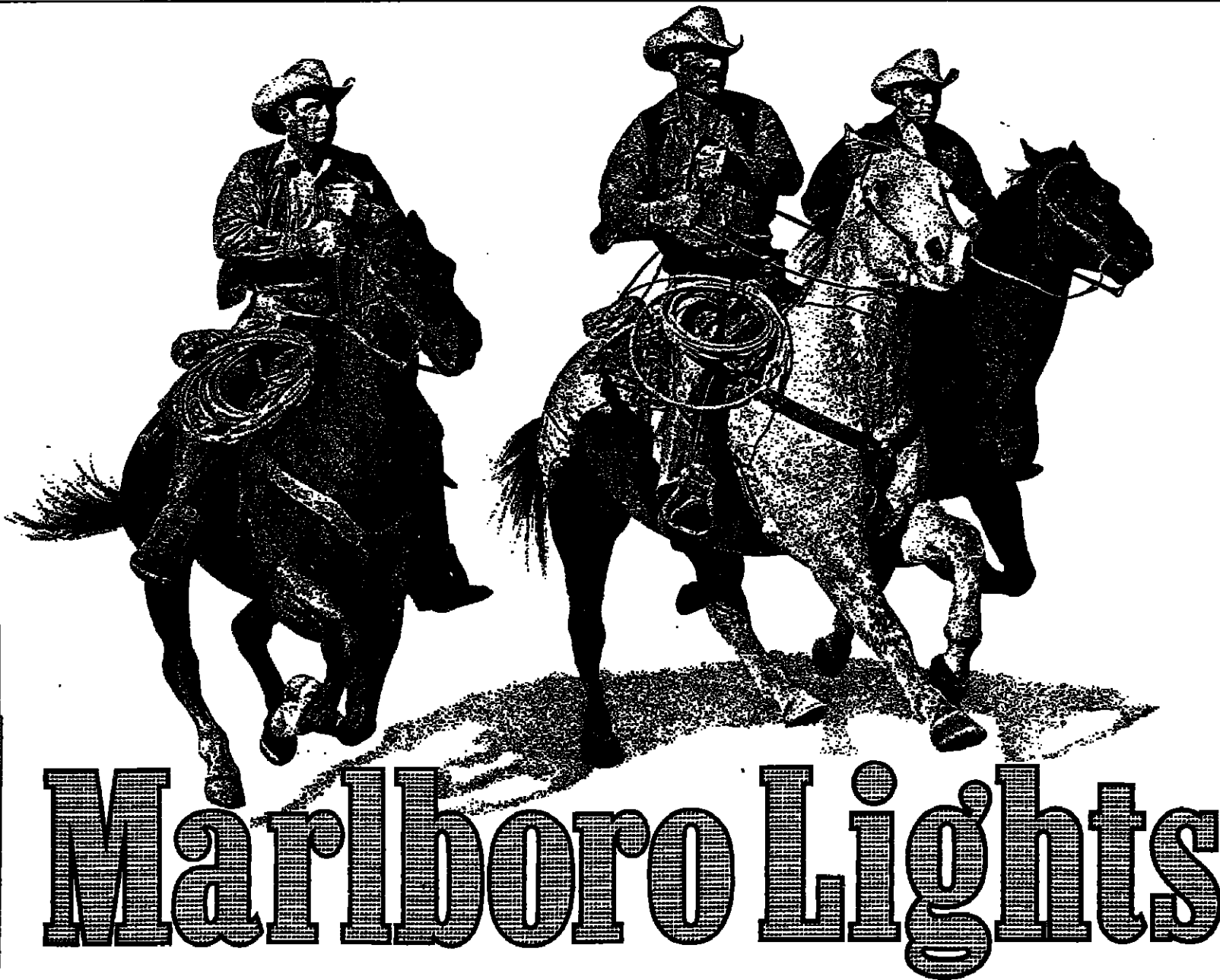
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Kuwait is an example to the world

Taking care of minors

MOTIVATED by the conviction that services extended by any state to satisfy basic needs of citizens are indicators of progress, civilised states compete in extending the best standard of services in various fields. No doubt such services facilitate and ease the healthy development of a society heading for a prosperous future.

Since inception, Kuwait has adopted this concept and adhered to it, in an attempt to be at the vanguard of civilised societies.

Though most world states followed in Kuwait's footsteps, the standard and comprehensiveness of services rendered distinguish one state from the other.

Besides free education, health services and appropriate housing for Kuwaiti families, Kuwait has precedence over all world states in giving utmost care to minors and orphans.

Establishing the minors' affairs public board, as an independent government body to take care of the group in question, denotes the prominent and comprehensive standard of services extended by the state of

Kuwait.

In its latest annual report, the minors' affairs board reviewed its performance throughout various stages. The orphans' affairs department was established in 1938 by an Amiri order issued by the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Ahmed Al Jaber, to act as a guardian for Kuwait minors.

Due to the scarcity of cases reported by the public, the board operated on a personal contact basis.

As the number of beneficiaries increased, it became pressing to reorganise the department's work procedures. In 1959 every case was given a serial number and a separate file including all documents and testimonials.

Expansion

To cope with the social and economic developments within the country, law No 4 of 1979, transformed the orphans' department into the minors' affairs department as an independent body of the Ministry of Justice, and was entrusted with additional responsibility.

By the diversity and expansion of its activities distinguished by integrating social with economic

aspects represented in investing minors' funds, the department won independence and wider powers for decision-making.

The total number of minors and their relatives under the guardianship of the minors' affairs board is currently up to about 15,000. This necessitated the need for developing the board's services up to the required level.

The director general of the minors' affairs public board said that steps were taken in this regard, namely the use of computers to get spontaneous and updated results.

A new organisation structure was set up after a review of the old one, coupled with fresh operation procedures to cope with the introduced modern systems.

Furthermore additional departments and sections were established, including the investment department which invests minors' funds and the services and follow up office.

Kuwaiti citizens cannot but be proud of the standard of services extended by the state along modern civilised lines.

Kuwait's foreign policy is neutral: Sheikh Saud

LONDON, March 25 (Kuna): The Kuwaiti Ambassador to the US, Sheikh Saud Nasser Al Sabah, has said that Kuwait's foreign policy stipulates freedom of political drive in all directions, East and West.

In an interview with daily Al Hawadeth, to be published here today, Sheikh Saud indicated that "Kuwait goes to the Eastern Bloc as well as to Western countries to acquire arms, re-register its ships or charter them."

On the Iraq-Iran war, the Kuwaiti diplomat said continuation of the Gulf conflict will lead to further destruction in the region, including all the Arabian Gulf countries, noting that HH the Amir of Kuwait sent messages to all leaders of permanent member states in the Security Council regarding the dangerous situation in the region.

He said that the Kuwaiti

leadership adopted such drive in view of the fact that "things can go out of hand."

With regard to re-registration or chartering Kuwaiti ships, Sheikh Saud said the Kuwaiti foreign policy is based on equilibrium, adding that contacts to take such steps included all big powers and not only the US and the Soviet Union.

On the Soviet proposal regarding the formation of a naval fleet affiliated to the UN to safeguard freedom of navigation in the Arabian Gulf, the Kuwaiti ambassador said his country was the first to call for such a measure, even before chartering ships to the Soviets or re-registering tankers with the US.

In 1985, and after many Kuwaiti ships were targets of attacks, Kuwait requested the UN to form an international task force to safeguard navigation in

the Gulf, Sheikh Saud said, adding that some countries, including the Soviet Union, said the UN cannot provide such a force.

Concerning the imposition of arms embargo on Iran, he said the Soviet Union would not approve such a measure while its troops are still in Afghanistan, indicating that Moscow wants a gradual end to the Gulf war and without interference of the big powers or the Security Council.

Sheikh Saud said the settlement process needs more efforts from the big powers, adding that Kuwait requires the Security Council to draft a formula that would be acceptable to all parties and permanent members in the Security Council to ratify a decision for imposing an arms embargo against the belligerent that refuses to abide by the ceasefire decision.

Afforestation plan

MINISTER of Public Works and chairman of the higher committee for the afforestation of Kuwait, Abdul Rahman Al Houli, yesterday met with members of the committee for coordination and afforestation plan.

They reviewed a special report on an afforestation plan and improvement of the environment that was prepared upon instruction of HH the Amir.

Following a detailed explanation of the plan, the conferees voiced a number of remarks and after amending certain aspects they endorsed the plan and referred it to the cabinet for final ratification.



● A terrible accident occurred on Arabian Gulf Street on Wednesday evening when an eighteen-year-old boy lost control of his car at high speed. The driver and another eighteen-year-old passenger were both killed instantly when the car smashed into a lamp-post and disintegrated into tiny pieces. Picture shows the largest remaining piece of the car after the high speed accident.

Charity opens ten centres for refugees in Khartoum

AHMAD AL Bahar, chairman of the Southern African Muslims Charity said that the group had opened ten centres in Khartoum for refugees from southern Sudan. These centres offered educational facilities to 3,500 pupils. The charity has also opened several health clinics for refugees in the area. He said that about 5,000 refugees had embraced Islam, although they had not been under any pressure to do so. They had been persuaded to adopt Islam merely by the example of the good treatment that they had received from the charity's representatives.

Two chiefs of the southern Sudan's Danku tribes had embraced Islam in this way.

Al Bahar said that the charity's centres provided free breakfasts to refugee children, which cost the charity only 40 fils per child per day. The centres had also begun a project to offer free meals to students of the Holy Quran. These meals cost the charity 20 dinars a year for each student.

The charity has also dug several water wells and was now providing free water to refugees who had previously had to pay a lot of money for their water supplies.

The Charity is currently preparing to lay the foundation stone for the largest Islamic Centre in Khartoum as well as building an Islamic Institute in the Noubu region.

Al Bahar has recently visited other African countries; Kenya, Malawi, Zimbabwe and Swaziland in order to assess the needs of Muslims in these areas.

Killed by electric shock

THE body of a ten-year-old Jordanian girl has been dispatched to the forensic medicine department for a post mortem examination.

The girl was killed by an electric shock.

Omani returns

MUSCAT, March 25, (Kuna): Undersecretary for political affairs at the foreign ministry Sayyid Haithem Bin Tariq Bin Tamour returned home yesterday after leading the sultanate's delegation to a meeting of the Islamic conference organisation foreign ministers held in Amman this week, Oman news agency reported.

Houses unfit for habitation

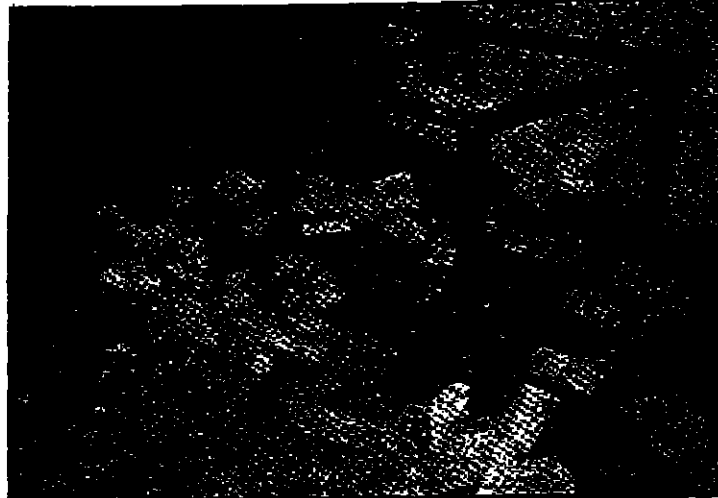
PEOPLE living in the Al Dhaher area are very unhappy about the condition of their houses which were built by the National Housing Authority according to a survey carried out by a Kuwaiti newspaper. The original complaints centred on the water boilers, several of which have exploded. The NHA has attempted to solve the problems but other faults have also come to light according to the poll.

The most common fault seems to be the facing bricks falling off the outer walls, in some cases entire walls have collapsed. Um Talal, the wife of teacher Ahmed Al Kandari, told the newspaper that the back wall of their house recently fell down, but that she had not been able to inform the NHA yet since her husband was out of town. "They are houses of paper," she said, her young son Talal adding, "I do not like this house because it keeps falling down."

Thefts

A resident told the daily that House No. 10, block 6 has been deserted for four months since its owner refused to accept it from the NHA saying that he was frightened of living there despite the NHA's restoration work. Teacher Haif Al Ajmi said that the houses were not fit for human habitation and blamed the NHA for the defects. Haif added that the residents had lost a lot of money spent on furniture and gardens because of the damage caused by collapsing walls and falling bricks.

Haif went on to say that the construction workers responsible for restoring the houses had



Facing bricks like these regularly fall off the walls.

also committed many thefts and even raped housemaids in the area.

Mohammed Al Mukhaimer pointed out that renovations to the houses had been going on for four years but had still not solved the problems. He said this showed that the contractor was incapable of repairing the properties and should be replaced. Another resident, Faleh Al Jubairan suggested that the government should give grants to the residents in order to allow them to make their own arrangements for maintenance and repairs.

Confidence

Salah Al Manea said that although complaints had been made to officials at the NHA nobody had bothered to come and see the houses and this meant that the residents had lost confidence in

the NHA. Speaking of his own house, Salah said that although the NHA had repaired it three months ago, the condition of this house was still unacceptable. He pointed out that although the Minister of State for Housing had visited the area before and been shocked by the problems and pledged to remedy the situation, the residents were astonished to see the minister say on television that the problems in Al Dhaher had been exaggerated. He urged the minister to make a second visit to the area to see for himself how bad the situation had become.

Naji Ali said the maintenance and repair work were careless and incompetent and called on the NHA to replace them with Korean workers who had a reputation for working quickly and efficiently.

Al Nouri charity society has projects in a number of countries

THE board chairman of the Abdullah Al Nouri Charity Society, Yousef Al Haji said the society is following in the same steps of Islamic charity it established at its founding in the early 70s.

Al Haji said the society has charity projects in a number of Islamic and developing countries which include the establishment of schools and institutes, hospitals and mosques.

In Indonesia, India, Pakistan, West Germany and the UK the society has established schools and institutes at a cost of about KD278 thousand, Al Haji said, adding that Islamic universities and schools were important to

the spread of Islam and the strengthening of Islamic values among Muslim young people.

Several hospitals and clinics have been built by the society in Thailand and Turkey, he added.

Islamic centres have been built in Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, Sudan, Indonesia and other Muslim countries at a cost of about KD489 thousand, and assistance is also provided to Islamic centres in non-Islamic countries, he added.

Mosques have been built in Egypt, Sudan, Jordan, Pakistan, Palestine and South Yemen by the society, he said, at a cost of KD115 thousand. Disaster assistance totalling more than KD90

thousand has also been donated by the society to victims in countries such as Bangladesh.

Al Haji said that other activities of the society include the publication of the Quran in different languages and the distribution of Islamic books in non-Arabic cultures.

He said that several delegations are sent to countries throughout the world to evaluate the condition of Muslims in these countries and to report on the needs in these communities.

He encouraged Muslims to provide assistance to their Muslim brothers to enable Islamic charity centres to continue their work.

Changes in Al flight schedule

DUE to the closure of Trivandrum Airport on April 1, Air India will reschedule flights AI959/978/979/958 on Friday, April 1, with Bombay/Kuwait flight leaving Bombay at 0145 am and arriving Kuwait at 0315 am.

The Kuwait/Trivandrum flight will leave from Kuwait at 0420 am and arrive Trivandrum at 1205 hrs at midday. The return Trivandrum/Kuwait flight will leave Trivandrum at 1315 hrs in the afternoon and arrive Kuwait at 1555 hrs.

AI Flight No. 958 to Bombay will leave Kuwait at 2300 hrs and arrive at Bombay at 0525 am on Saturday.

Air India's summer schedule will have nine flights a week to India, out of which eight flights will be operating to Bombay.

The newly introduced Sunday non-stop flight to Bombay will be a daylight flight with departure from Kuwait at 1050 hrs and arrival at Bombay at 1715 hrs.

Kuwait will be linked with Delhi twice a week with non-stop flights on Thursday and Saturday.

Goa bound passengers will have three flights a week which will have one stop at Bombay. These Goa flights will be on Monday, Tuesday and Friday nights.

The non-stop flight to Trivandrum on Friday has been advanced by two hrs, with another flight to Trivandrum on Thursday evening via Bombay. There will also be connections to Trivandrum from Bombay, for AI flights leaving from Kuwait on Monday and Tuesday evenings.

All AI flights during the summer schedule will be operated with an entirely new fleet of A310 aircrafts.

Passengers who are booked to travel on AI flights from March 27, onwards, should contact their travel agents or Air India booking office to obtain the revised departure timings.

Express service to Argentina suspended

KUWAIT'S Post Office Department has announced that it will not accept express delivery items addressed to Argentina until mid-July.

It explained that the Postal Administration of Argentina had notified it that the express service had been suspended until mid-July.

Saudi Arabia reports fake Muslim pilgrims

LAGOS, March 25, (Reuters): Saudi Arabia, which is trying to halt an influx of fake Muslim pilgrims, has reported 105 Nigerians, the news agency of Nigeria (NAN) reported yesterday.

A Saudi airlines flight brought the 67 men and 38 women from Jeddah to the northern city of Kano last Saturday, the agency said.

Thousands of Nigerians make the haj (pilgrimage) to Makka every year, but a sizeable minority are beggars, prostitutes and drug peddlers whose activities strain bilateral relations.

Five Nigerians face the death penalty in Saudi Arabia for drug offences, according to Nigerian press reports.

A Saudi delegation met Nigerian military president General Ibrahim Babangida this month to discuss plans for a trouble-free "greater haj" later this year.

Iranian pilgrims fought bloody battles with Saudi police last year.

The NAN sources said

Iranian power boat retrieved

ABOARD USS Reuben James in the Gulf, March 25, (Reuters): The US Navy has retrieved an armed power launch apparently abandoned by Iranians in the Strait of Hormuz.

The boat, with twin 25 mm anti-aircraft guns mounted in the bow, was brought alongside the USS Reuben James on Thursday shortly after the US Defence Department media pool arrived aboard the frigate.

The commanding officer, Commander John J. Kieley, said it was too soon to assess the military value of the find. "I'm assuming it's Iranian," he added.

The boat was found 12 miles off the coast of Oman and 40 miles south of Iran.

The area is close to main shipping lanes where tankers and other ships come under Iranian attack in retaliation for Iraqi attacks on Iranian shipping.

The boat was 30 feet (10 metres) long and powered by twin diesel engines and appeared to be of a type commonly used by Iranian revolutionary guards to attack shipping.

ROYAL COURT

Amiri and Crown Prince cables

HH the Amir has sent a cable of congratulations to the President of Greece on the national day of his country. HH the Crown Prince and Premier Sheikh Saeed Al Abdullah has also sent a similar cable of congratulations to Andreas Papandreu, the Prime Minister of Greece.

KUWAIT PRESS DIGEST

Bid to tarnish Saudi image

A KUWAITI weekly magazine affirmed that the clamour created over the sale of Chinese missiles to Saudi Arabia is artificial and a desperate attempt to tarnish Riyadh's image, accusing it of setting up the stage to possess nuclear weapons.

Weekly Al Nahdha in its issue to be published today noted that Israel was behind this scheme, through its circles in the US which collaborated with American bodies in an anti-Saudi campaign.

To face these blatant lies, Saudi Arabia explained the complete facts about these weapons, saying that it has the right to obtain arms from any party according to its needs, the weekly indicated.

It stressed that any Saudi weapon is employed for Arab and Islamic use and not only for the kingdom's.

The magazine said that Saudi Arabia's responsibilities have become great, particularly in light of the mounting tension in the Arabian Gulf. It has to safeguard and maintain the Islamic shrines, it went on saying.

Kuwait's envoy to Vatican presents credentials

VATICAN CITY, March 25, (Kuna): The Kuwaiti Ambassador to France, Dr Tariq Abdul Razzaq Rzuouki, yesterday presented to Pope John Paul II his credentials as concurrent ambassador extraordinary plenipotentiary to the Vatican.

The Kuwaiti ambassador was accorded full official reception upon arrival at the Vatican, where he was met by chief protocol officials.

At the outset, the Vatican's Swiss Music band welcomed the Kuwaiti envoy, who afterwards inspected a dispatch of honour guards and proceeded to meet the pontiff.

After submitting his credentials, the Kuwaiti diplomat and the Pope exchanged statements on the occasion.

Dr Rzuouki conveyed to the Holy See wishes of everlasting health and prosperity from HH the Amir of Kuwait.

Replying, the Pope paid tribute to the Amir of Kuwait, and the country's openness in fostering friendly links with the Vatican.

The pontiff noted Kuwait's

discreet foreign policy and concern with strengthening ties with all world countries. He added that relations between Kuwait and the Vatican testify to a mutual desire for consolidating international peace and serving mankind.

Appreciation

Rzuouki expressed Kuwait's deep appreciation of the Vatican's constructive role in preserving world peace and security, which has been menaced by dire regional flashpoints such as the Iran-Iraq war, now in its eighth year.

The diplomat affirmed Kuwait's desire to halt the war on basis of UN Security Council resolution 598, which was adopted unanimously last July and demanded a ceasefire in prelude to comprehensive peace talks.

Rzuouki also referred to the popular Palestinian uprising, and pointed out that the protracted "Palestinian confrontations" with Israeli occupation forces was a challenge to their peace efforts against Israel's brutal and oppressive measures in occupied Arab land.

Education conference

THE chairman of Kuwait Teachers Society Omar Al Ghareer said the society will hold its 18th education conference from March 26 to 31. He added that the purpose of the conference is to improve the social status of teachers and to further develop the system of education in Kuwait.

The conference information committee issued its first bulletin, which included information about preparations made for the conference and activities of the sub-committees. Bulletins will be issued daily throughout the conference.

Omani ship due in Colombo

COLOMBO, March 25, (Kuna): The Omani sailing vessel SNV Shabab Oman is scheduled to arrive in Sri Lanka today on a four-day visit.

"The visit is part of the ship's 17,000-mile voyage to Australia where she participated in the bicentenary celebrations in January," a press release said.

The same vessel called into Sri Lanka in October last year on its way to Australia.

Saudi minister visits Bahrain

MANAMA, March 25, (Kuna): Amir of Bahrain Sheikh Issa Bin Salman Al Khalifa today received Saudi Minister of Electricity and Industry Abdel Aziz Al Zamel, currently on a visit to the country.

Bilateral relations were reviewed during the meeting.

It added that Sheikh Issa emphasised the cooperation between the two GCC states, particularly in the industrial field, affirming the continuation of such cooperation.

Inspection tour

INFORMATION Undersecretary for Press, Culture and Censorship and head of the higher committee organising the first GCC theatrical carnival Hamad Yousef Al Roumi, yesterday toured the carnival headquarters at the Kuwait Sheraton.

Al Roumi, toured the press centre and inspected progress of work in various other committees, hours before the opening of that carnival.

Information Minister Sheikh Jaber Al Mubarak Al Hamad will patronise inauguration of that carnival today.



● The Kuwait Sheraton Hotel held a dinner party for people born on Feb 29 and their families at the Al Hambra Restaurant. The surprise of the night was a special cake presented to the birthday guests for a cake cutting ceremony. The birthday guests were also presented with special gifts from the management with best wishes from the Sheraton for a happy birthday and four years of success and happiness. Picture shows a scene from the party.

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INDUSTRIES

TV CORNER

New season begins next week

THE new summer season of KTV 2 begins on April 1. Listings for Friday were not released to the press because KTV 2 hopes to announce the "brand new schedule with several new series" next week.

This week the GCC Club's Football Championship matches will be televised on Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday. Transmission on those days

opens at about 4.15 pm. Normal viewing, according to the schedule, has not been interrupted.

Movies this week are *Gotcha* (Saturday), *A Different Affair* (Tuesday) and *Sam Whisky* (Thursday). All films will be shown at 10.30 pm on KTV 2. Thursday's feature film, starring Burt Reynolds and Angie Dickinson, is a 1969 Western

about a schemer coerced into organising a heist of golden bells. Western aficionados and Reynolds fans may enjoy the film. All the regular features, including comedies, will be shown except *Perfect Strangers* on Wednesday. Instead Mary, featuring Mary Tyler Moore as a columnist on a daily newspaper, will be shown at 10.00 pm.

This week on KTV 2

- SUNDAY**
- 4.15 Holy Quran
4.35 Football: Al Kazema vs Al Rifa'a, Bahrain.
6.10 The Lone Ranger: "Walk A Tight Wire". Cartoon serial.
6.30 *Butterfly Island*: the islanders overcome yet another challenge and assist in arresting vandals.
7.00 *Understanding Islam*: a weekly programme on Islamic thought and philosophy.
7.30 *The Wacky World of Sports*: a half-hour lighter look at sporting events.
8.00 *News in English*
8.40 *Adderly*: "Class of '87". Adderly joins a training course on spying. And he suspects one of the trainees is a spy.
9.30 *He's the Mayor*: "And That's the Way it Was". Comedy.
10.00 Q.E.D. "Your Child's Diet on Trial". A field survey on the effects of diet on children's behaviour.
10.30 *Best-Seller*: "Space". The mini-series, based on James Michener's novel, continues tonight with the historic landing of man on the moon.
12.00 *News in Brief/Magazine D'Actualite*/Closedown
- MONDAY**
- 6.00 Holy Quran
6.10 *Yoga Treasure Hunt*: cartoon serial.
6.30 *The Animal Express*: cartoon serial.
7.00 *Living Report*: weekly programme on current world events.
7.30 *Don't Waste It*: comedy about an English family and their differences.
8.00 *News in English*
8.40 *The Law and Harry McGraw*: "Old Heroes Never Lie". A young man claims he is the killer. But McGraw is certain he is not telling the truth.
9.30 *Horizon*: "The 25 Hour Clock". A study on the human body's harmon-

ious working system.
10.30 *Best-Seller*: "A Year in the Life". This mini-series is on the life, love and fortunes of the Gardner family.
12.00 *News in Brief/Magazine D'Actualite*/Closedown

TUESDAY

4.15 Holy Quran
4.35 Football: Al Kazema vs Al Finga'a (Oman).
6.10 *Rainbow Brit*: cartoon serial.
6.30 *Punkie Brewster*: Punkie and Cherry join a girl's club.
7.00 *Beyond 2000*: a look at latest advances in science and technology. Tonight, an energy saving device for sportsmen; photocopies; home videos and new tunnel building methods.
8.00 *News in English*
8.40 *Yen and the Law*: a local programme.
8.50 *Heart of the City*: another action-packed episode about detective Kennedy's adventure.
9.30 *Omnit*: The New Frontier: hosted by Peter Ustinov.
10.00 *Mary*: a light-hearted look at a female journalist's life and work.
10.30 *Made-for-TV Movie*: "A Different Affair". Giving advice on radio seems easier to a female psychiatrist after she takes custody of a young child.

WEDNESDAY

6.00 Holy Quran
6.10 *The Get Along Gang*: cartoons.
6.30 *The Micro at Work*: "The Fact of the Matter". The use of computers in policing.
7.00 *The Living Isles*: "Sheltering With Man". Mike claims to have magical powers and cheats his brother to get money.
8.00 *News in English*



The Bill Cosby Show, 10 pm on Thursday.

8.40 J.J. Starbuck: a children's story writer dies in mysterious circumstances. Starbuck takes up the case.

9.30 *The World of Strange Power*: Arthur C. Clarke, a scientist, author and visionary, presents programme in "The Verdict". Clarke examines all the phenomena shown in previous episodes.

10.00 *Kate and Allie*: comedy about two divorced women living together.
10.30 *Falcon Crest*: "A Madness Most Discreet". Richard and Maggie don't walk down the aisle; Emma is being blackmailed; and Angela has another plan in the offing.
12.00 *News Summary/Magazine D'Actualite*/Closedown



Turkish clothes shown on Thursday at a fashion preview.

Madame Z back with new creations

TURKISH Designer Zuhair Yorgancioglu, better known as "Madame Z", is back in Kuwait to show her collection of clothes inspired by designs popular in ancient Turkey.

For decades Turkey had been copying European fashion. Thirty years ago, Madame Z took upon herself the task of reviving Turkish fashion. She specialises in evening wear.

She laments the loss of "the classic, ancient art of clothing" and urges women not to "ape Western fashions." Clothes, she says, must flatter a woman's figure and not exaggerate it. She incorporates her philosophy in her clothes. Lavishly embroidered clothes for evening wear, inspired by Oriental, particularly Turkish designs, were designed and sold to women of fashion around the world. Some of her clients

include Jacqueline Onassis, Nancy Reagan and others. She also designed special embroidered robes for Adnan Khashoggi.

She recently made a wedding gown for a client at a cost of \$100,000. The wedding dress was embroidered with gold thread and studded with precious and semi-precious stones.

Nine Turkish models will take part in the four-night fashion show opening tonight at the Sheraton Hotel. This is the fourth show held by Madame Z in Kuwait.

Some of her designs, blending Oriental and Western concepts, were shown at a fashion preview held at the Sheraton Hotel on Thursday. It was attended by Ismail Umil Bilge, director of Turkish Tourism and Information Office in Kuwait.

A glimpse of Malaysian culture

A GLIMPSE of Malaysian arts and culture will be seen at a two-day festival due to be held in Kuwait on March 29 and 30 at the SAS Hotel.

A group of 24 dancers, singers and musicians from the National Cultural Group will participate in the festival to promote Malaysia as a tourist resort.

Malaysia's Culture and Tourism Minister Sabbarudin Chik is to arrive later this week to take part in the festival.

Popular vocalist Sharifah Aini, accompanied by a seven-member Channel 11 band, sings in Malay, Arabic and English. Aini will present a selection of old Malay numbers.

The festival is currently touring the Gulf, including Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha. It has been organised by the Culture and Tourism Ministry and the Tourist Development Corporation as part of efforts to attract Arab tourists.

Arab women hold art show in UK

LONDON, March 25, (Kuna): Arab women living in Britain are showing their works at an exhibition called "Arab Women Artists in the UK." The exhibition, which opened on Friday, features paintings, sculpture, ceramics, prints and videos made by 26 Arab women artists.

It is being held at the Kufa Gallery in London. The UK-based artists are from Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Tunisia, Palestine and Sudan. Some of

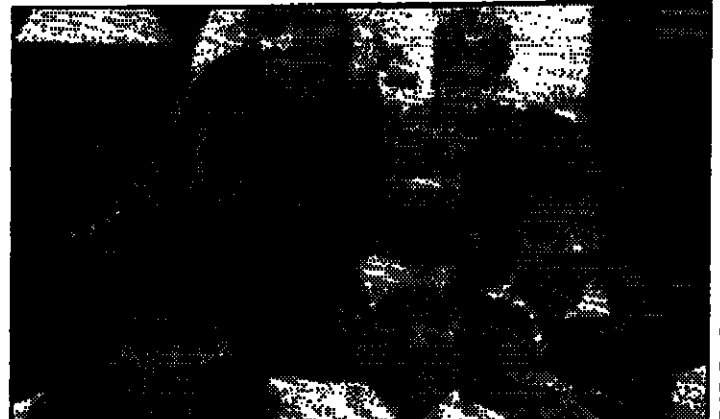
them are well-known in the Arab world including Ida Alameddini, Selma Rayes, Sundus Omar Ali, Houria Niat, Laila Shawwa and Soud Al Attar.

The exhibition runs at the gallery until April 14. A series of lectures will be given by Arab women. One of the speakers is Nadia Hijab, a London-based writer specialising in Arab politics. She will examine the current social, economic and political conditions in the Arab world.

TELEVISION PROGRAMMES

KTV 1

- 2.15 Holy Quran
2.30 World News via Satellite
3.30 Ibtal Al Mu'laeb: cartoon serial
4.00 News Summary
4.05 Magazine D'Actualite
4.25 L'uyoun Sadran: ep. 3: starring Adel Afana, Abeer Essa, Rashida Dajani, Dawood Jalal.
5.45 Open University
6.50 News Summary
5.55 Noor Al Islam: "An Afghanistan." Guests are Sheikh Burhanuddin Zayani, Sheikh Mohammad Sadiq Shukri. Hosted by Ahmad Abdul Qadir.
7.25 Nazrat Alal Alam: cultural film
7.40 Security and Citizens: presented by Nasser Radhan
8.15 Good Evening and Local News
9.00 News in Arabic
10.00 Layali Al Hilmiya: Arabic serial, starring Yahya Fakhrani, Safiya Al Omari, Hassan Yusuf, Firdous Abdul Hamid, Huda Sultan.
10.50 Dafatar Al Ayam: a well-known Arab poet Hussein Fariz talks about his poetry and literature



'Where's the Boss' the title of tonight's episode of Married with Children, 7.30 pm on KTV 2.

in the Arab world
11.45 News Summary
11.50 World News via Satellite
12.25 Holy Quran/Closedown

KTV 2

- 6.00 Holy Quran
6.10 Thundercats: cartoon serial for young viewers.
6.30 Not Another Science Show
7.00 Lorne Greene's New Wilderness: a look at birds, animals and plants in their natural habitat on Tasmania Island.
7.30 Married with Children: "Where's the Boss?" Al decides it's time to get recognition or quit his job at the shoe store.

8.00 News in English.
8.40 Houston Knights: "Diminished Capacity." A prisoner released on bail is pursued by unidentified men. The knights are asked to protect the prisoner.
9.30 To be announced.
10.30 *Gotcha*. Starring: Anthony Edwards, Maria Adams. A man goes to Paris for a holiday but finds himself involved in an espionage operation.
12.00 *News in Brief/Magazine D'Actualite*/Closedown

Please note that programmes and timings are liable to change without notice.

RADIO PROGRAMMES

BBC World Services

- 0000 World News
09 News about Britain
15 Radio Newsworld
30 Personal View
45 Recording of the Week
0100 News Summary followed by Outlook
30 Juke Box Dury
45 Nature Notebook
0200 World News
09 Commentary
15 Network UK
30 People and Politics
0300 World News
09 News about Britain
15 The World Today
30 Business Matters
0400 News
30 Here's the World
45 Reflections
0500 World News
09 Twenty-Four Hours: News Summary
30 Personal View
45 The World Today
0600 News
30 Meridian
0700 World News
09 Twenty-Four Hours: News Summary
30 From the Weeklies
45 Network UK
0800 World News
09 Reflections
15 A Jolly Good Show
0900 World News
09 British Press Review
15 The World Today
30 Financial News followed by

- 45 Sports Roundup
09 Personal View
1000 News Summary followed by Here's the World
15 Letter from America
30 People and Politics
1100 World News
09 News about Britain
15 Chain Reaction
30 Meridian
1200 Radio Newsworld
15 Multitrack 3
45 Sports Roundup
1300 World News
09 Twenty-Four Hours: News Summary
30 Network UK
45 Good Books
1400 News Summary followed by Album Time
30 Sportsworld
1500 Radio Newsworld
15 Sportsworld
1600 World News
09 Commentary
1700 News Summary followed by Sportsworld
45 Sports Roundup
1800 News
30 Musical Masters of the Baroque
1900 News Summary followed by Play of the Week: 5th The Browning Version; 12th Remembrance Contd.; 19th From the Lion Rock; 26th Happy Families.
2000 World News
09 Twenty-Four Hours: News Summary
30 Meridian
2100 News Summary followed by Health Matters
15 Capriccio
30 People and Politics
2200 World News

FM Services

- 0600 Easy Listening
0830 News
0840 Easy Listening
1000 Songs and Music
1300 Easy Listening
1330 News
1400 Classical Music
1600 Easy Listening
1700 Spanish Hour
1800 Pops
2130 News
2145 Pops
2200 Indian Classical Hour
2300 Easy Listening
0200 Closedown

Urdu

- 1900 Opening
1910 Behar-e-Qaul
1916 Programme Preview
1920 Songs
1935 Press Report
1940 Jazib
2000 News
2020 Songs
2040 Dhanak
2100 Closedown

CINEMA TODAY

Al Andalus
Carry on England
Starring: Kenneth Connors, Judy Geeson

Al Hama
Shabab Fi Al Jaheem (Arabic)
Starring: Mamdouh Abdul Ajeem, Mirvat Ameen

Drive-In
Zaman Hatem Zahran (Arabic)
Starring: Noor Al Shariff, Bost, Salah Al Saadani

Al Firdous
Samraat (Hindi)
Starring: Dharmendra, Hema Malini

Al Fataheh
Idanazhiyl Oru Kalocha (Malayalam)
Fahad Open-Air Armaan (Hindi)

Al Jahra
Last Shark
Granada
Wanda Nevada
Subalikhah
Al Rajul Yahub Marratatin (Arabic)
Al Jeeb
Villambaram (Malayalam)
Ahmadi Drive-In
Legal Eagles
Al Sahiya
Hot Shots
Starring: Jim Younger

PRAYERS

Fajr	4.27 am
Zuhr	11.54
Asr	3.23 pm
Maghreb	6.02
Isha	7.19

NIGHT CHEMIST

Kuwait
Al Ghanem Pharmacy
nr. Carlton, Fahd Al Salem St.
Al Amal Pharmacy
Opp. Commercial Market, Mubarak Al Kabir St.
Hawali and Nagra
Al Andalus Pharmacy
Tunis St.

Salmyia and Rumeithiya
Al Hiba Pharmacy
Salem Al Mubarak St.
Fahadheel and Ahmadi
Al Ahmadi Pharmacy
Souk Ahmadi

Khaitan
Al Tawfiq Pharmacy
Raj'an Commercial Centre, South St.
Jahra
Al Zahra Pharmacy
New Souk

WHAT'S ON

ARTS

Free Atelier
An exhibition of paintings by Samiya Ahmad Sayyed Omar will be open from March 28 at the Free Atelier Gallery, Arabian Gulf St., near Amiri Hospital. It will be open from 8.30 am to 12 noon and 4 to 7 pm.

Gandhi Gallery
Egyptian artist Magdi Kenawy is showing his latest collection of lithographs and prints at the gallery in Salhiya Complex. The exhibition is open daily from 9 am to 12.30 pm and 4 to 8 pm, until March 31.

Sultan Gallery
An exhibition of oil paintings by Pakistani artist Yasmeen Bhamia will be held at the gallery, Al Soor St., from March 28. It will be open daily from 9 am to 1 pm and 5 to 8 pm.

MUSIC

Upasana
Upasana presents a musical nite. — Ghanamanjari, featur-

ing South Indian film songs, on April 7, 7.30 pm.
Geethanjali — featuring Hindi film songs — will be presented by the same group, 6.30 pm, on April 8.

Both programmes will be held at the Indian Arts Circle auditorium, Funaites. For reservations phone 5643643; 3987409.

THEATRE

Kuwait Players
Kuwait Players presents "Wait Until Dark," a suspense drama, by Frederick Knott, directed by Mike Conden, starring Jennifer Gatland and Derrick Hicks. It will be performed at the Universal American School, Salwa, at 8 pm on March 28, 29, 30, 31. For reservations phone 5657749; 5332568.

SOCIAL

Kapilku Membership
A computerised census of all Filipinos in Kuwait will soon be published by the Philippine Embassy. Those who have not been included in the Kapilku listing are requested to register and submit their membership

census forms at the embassy or at any Filipino restaurant.

Kuwait-Welsh Society
The Society will hold "Nosen Lawen" (social evening), 8 pm, April 7. For details phone 3912384; 4874548.

Salcette United Whist Drive
Salcette United will hold a Whist Drive-cum-Tea Party for its members and guests on Friday, April 8, 3.30 pm at Ramada Al Salam Hotel. For details contact D'Costa - 2439000, ext. 2537 and Agnello - 2460983.

Flag-hoisting ceremony
A flag hoisting ceremony will be held at 9 am on March 26 at the Bangladesh Embassy premises in Jabriya to mark the Independence and National Day of Bangladesh. All Bangladeshis are invited.

Filipino Get-together
The next "kumustahan" (get-together) will be held on Saturday, March 26, 4-6 pm, in the Church Hall. All Filipinos are invited. Free snacks will be served. Admission free.

SPORTS

E.M.A.C. Tournament
A tennis tournament for

under-16s will be held from April 13 to 16 at the SAS Hotel. Participating teams are from Abu Dhabi, Oman, Damascus, American School of Kuwait, Universal American School, Kuwait English School and New English School. The tournament has been organised by E.M.A.C. (Eastern Mediterranean Activities Conference).

Interschol Knockout '88
Interschol Knockout '88: Grand Finale takes place on Wednesday, April 13. The event features student and teacher teams from Kuwait's schools in a series of exciting games. Barbecue dinner and beverages will be served by the poolside. Valuable prizes. For details contact the hotel.

HOTELS

At the Meriden
Kiwi Festival features the fruit in cocktails, salads, main courses and pastries. The promotion is being held in La Brasserie, Al Waha and Al Fingian. The festival ends on April 3.

Dine in the Versailles Restaurant and enjoy jazz music and ballads presented by Tony and Jenny's band. The band plays in the restaurant on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday nights.

At the Sheraton
Turkish designer Madame Z will show her latest collection at a fashion show at the hotel's Grand Ballroom, nightly, 8.30 pm, until March 29.

At the SAS
The Peacock Room offers Chinese dining from Peking to Szechuan daily for lunch and dinner, except Saturday.

Al Boom is one of the exciting eating places in town. The restaurant on the traditional dhow offers Oriental and Western cuisine for dinner, nightly.

At the Hilton
The all-day dining restaurant, La Palma, offers Oriental, Continental and international cuisine, as well as a large array of sweets and desserts. Open for lunch and dinner. A full American buffet breakfast is available from 6.30 am to 11 am. Open daily from 6.30 am to midnight.

MISCELLANEOUS

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EDITORIALS

ARAB TIMES

Thought for today

LOVE is like measles — all the worse when it comes late in life — Douglas Jerrold, English writer (1803-1857).

Yugoslavia offers lessons for Moscow

By William Echikson

BELGRADE: Thousands of workers go on strike. Foreign debt stretches the economy toward its breaking point. And the ruling Communist Party is riddled by rivalries and seems unable to act.

This East European scenario isn't taking place in Poland. It's happening in non-aligned Yugoslavia — a country that broke with the Soviet Union in 1948 and usually is thought of as a communist laboratory for political flexibility and economic innovation.

Yugoslavia's crisis offers lessons for Mikhail Gorbachev. Many of the free-market "worker self-management" reforms that he is urging on the Soviet Union were tested long ago here in the southeastern corner of Europe.

"We had our perestroika (restructuring) back in the 1950s, with decentralisation and the introduction of market forces," recalls Marjan Senjur, a professor at Ljubljana's Economic Faculty. "Today, it all is a great disappointment."

What went wrong? Start with a well-intentioned but almost unworkable political system. In an effort to promote pluralism among the country's 18 ethnic groups, Yugoslavia's postwar architect Josip Broz Tito formulated a decentralised federal system composed of six republics and two, autonomous provinces, Collective

Since Tito's death, a collective state presidency has ruled, with members elected by regional parliaments and one member rotating into the office of president each year. This process makes federal leaders dependent on local party chieftains and unable to impose order.

"Everybody tries to look-out for his own selfish local interests at the expense of the national interest," laments Slobodan Filipovic, executive secretary of the party Central Committee. "We must learn to compromise."

Political fragmentation has proved a drag on the economy. When Western banks were giving easy credits, each republic rushed to finance its own ambitious industries. The result was a

repetition of inefficient showy projects — each republic built its own prestigious steel, chemical, and textile plants without coordinating efforts with the other republics. The country was failing last year to make payments on its mammoth \$20 billion-plus debt, inflation was rocketing to 167 per cent, and unemployment was rising to more than 15 per cent.

Although Yugoslav stores still remain full of goods unavailable elsewhere in the communist world, the average worker is having a hard time making ends meet. Economists estimate that living standards have dropped in the past two years by more than a third.

Corruption
"We used to buy clothes in Italy or travel to Vienna for a weekend at the opera," recalls a businessman from Slovenia, the wealthy border province. "Now we can't even afford to go skiing here at home."

Endemic corruption has emerged. A huge scandal erupted last fall over finances at the Bosnian firm Agrokomprom, which had issued up to \$400 million of phony promissory notes. Dubbed "Agrogate" by the Yugoslav press, the fraud's fallout implicated high-level politicians who had secured the loans. Vice-President Hamdija Pozderac was forced to resign.

The scandal showed how local party bosses circumvent national economic policies to pursue their own pork-barrel projects. According to unofficial estimates, state enterprises floated up to \$9 billion of worthless commercial paper in 1986. The phony paper undermined government efforts to impose fiscal austerity and fuelled inflation.

In an effort to redress the situation, Prime Minister Branko Mikulic tried last year to carry out a strict bankruptcy law and impose wage-freezes. Workers resisted and the government backed down, exempted many companies from wage freezes, and introducing price controls.

Negotiations have opened with the International Monetary Fund to obtain debt relief, and constitutional changes to strengthen the federal authority are under discussion.

The Christian Science Monitor News Service.

US tactics against Noriega are blunt

By Tony Barber

WASHINGTON, (Reuters): The United States may succeed in ousting Panama's strongman, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, but may alienate Latin American countries wary of US meddling.

Some experts are asking if US tactics are too heavy-handed against the man a White House spokesman dubbed a "fox in a hen house".

Few specialists doubt that the Reagan administration will secure Noriega's removal, and most agree that would be a good thing.

But some foresee frictions in relations with Latin American states normally friendly to the United States.

"The Latin Americans are not terribly comfortable with the United States seeming to be so close to internal events in Panama," said Peter Hakim of inter-American Dialogue, a non-governmental research group based in Washington.

"The United States has not tried to keep Latin American countries actively involved in this process," Hakim told Reuters. "He said Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela were concerned at the US tactics."

Wary
Eva Loser, another specialist, said Latin American countries traditionally felt wary when the United States became drawn into regional crisis, even when it involved a government with which they felt little affinity.

"But it's not clear to me that a majority of Latin American governments are dissatisfied. There's a wait-and-see approach," said Loser, who is with the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

The Reagan administration wants Noriega out of office partly because of his alleged involvement in drug running and partly because it wants stability

in the country to which it will hand over control of the Panama Canal at the end of 1999.

The United States calls virtually every day for Noriega, head of the powerful Panama Defence Forces (PDF), to make way for civilian rulers, saying he commands practically no public support.

With Congress firmly behind the Reagan administration's policies, White House and State Department officials have felt free to speak publicly about Noriega with scarcely disguised hostility and contempt.

Resign
Dismissing a conditional offer to resign which Noriega made on Monday, White House spokesman Martin Fitzwater said: "The proposal is like getting the fox out of the hen house, then giving him quarters next door."

"The colourful vocabulary... represents a level of frustration that has been built up in the United States," Loser said. "You see it in Congress, with the breast-beating that has been brought forth there."

Independent US experts say there is little question that Noriega will go, and sooner rather than later. US political and economic pressure, added to widespread public disaffection with Noriega in Panama, make that clear, they say.

With almost all of Panama's businesses closed by a general strike and the country's vital international banking network paralysed, the United States needs to do little more to make the heat on Noriega intolerable.

But some specialists say the United States faces an uphill task in promoting civilian rule in Panama, where the PDF's power would not vanish just because Noriega left office.

The United States is also in danger of blurring its goals because it often says it does not object to the PDF as a body. "We want to make it clear that our disenchantment with Noriega does not extend to the institution," Fitzwater said.

US Navy maintains high profile in the Gulf

Western warships provide spillover protection

By Warren Richey

ABOARD THE HMS BATTLEAXE IN THE GULF: "Motortanker, Motortanker, this is a warship on your starboard beam."

The Iranian-accented voice crackles out across the airwaves of the southern Gulf from the Iranian frigate Sabalan.

Four miles away, a lone super-tanker continues its course just inside the Strait of Hormuz as if it never heard the call. Ten hours earlier the same Iranian warship was said to have pumped several shells without warning into a Panamanian tanker 12 miles off Dubai.

But on that sunny Friday afternoon, the Iranian frigate was within sight of both the United States warship Gallery and the British frigate Battleaxe. The Iranians have never attacked a commercial ship in the Gulf when foreign warships were near. The tanker captain, apparently realising this, ignored the Iranians. This time it worked.

The Sabalan episode illustrates how Western and Soviet warships primarily in the Gulf to protect their own national flagged ships, often provide spillover protection for all shipping simply

by their presence. But the incident also points up a basic difference in approach between the high-profile efforts of the 11-ship British Armilla Patrol and mine-sweeping force.

Shadow
While the US forces are more willing to go out of their way to shadow the Iranians and let them know they are being watched, the British seem determined to avoid even the appearance of a challenge or confrontation.

At the time of the Iranian radio call, the Battleaxe was accompanying the British-owned liquefied-gas carrier Hemina into the Gulf. The two ships proceeded on courses with no changes.

In contrast, the US warship Gallery seemed to loiter nearby, keeping a close watch on the Iranians.

"The Gallery is sitting there watching him (the Iranian warship) watching the Gallery," said Cmdr T. J. Norman-Walker as he surveyed the situation from the bridge of the Battleaxe.

But the Battleaxe was watching as well. One deck below the bridge in the Battleaxe's highly sophisticated operations centre, technicians manning radar screens and electronic sensor equipment

were busy recording the Sabalan's every move and radio emission. A transmission from nearby Abu Musa Island — a Revolutionary Guard naval base — is intercepted and recorded. The Americans are presumed to be doing the same in the USS Gallery.

Eventually the Sabalan crossed in front of the Battleaxe only a mile and a half ahead, a move that might have caused trouble had the Battleaxe been under US command. (The US forces rarely permit the Iranians to approach closer than five miles.) The Iranian move raised some eyebrows on the Battleaxe but no ire.

Relaxed
"There was no hostile intent. She seems more interested in the USS Gallery than in us," said radar technician Andrew Allman.

In contrast to the French and US navies, the British are very relaxed. British naval officers emphasise that they are not in the Gulf to serve as international policemen or take a stand against Iranian aggression. They stress their only role is to protect British-owned or — operated shipping.

"We have no choice in any part of this," says Capt. C.H.D. Cooke-Priest, commander of British

naval forces in the Gulf. "Our only interest is to protect British shipping."

"The whole idea is to keep the status quo by not playing it up and to keep it as low key as possible," says Commander Norman-Walker, captain of the Battleaxe. "We are not at war with Iran. That is a bottom line."

Britain's naval policy in the Gulf has drawn criticism among Gulf shipping executives who see it as being wishy-washy. Such criticism comes as prospects for peace in the Iran-Iraq war seem as remote as ever, and as the "tanker war" continues to escalate.

So far this year, Iraq claims to have carried out 21 attacks on Iranian shipping, and Iran has raised 12 ships in the southern and central Gulf.

Attacks
"I think if we go on like this for long the whole navy force out here will be a laughing stock," says an executive at one of the largest shipping firms in the Gulf.

British naval officials say they measure their effectiveness in terms of the safe passage provided to British ships. "In the eight years that the Armilla Patrol has been operating there have been no attacks on British-

accompanied ships," says Captain Cooke-Priest.

Nonetheless, many analysts are beginning to ask whether there might be more effective ways of keeping peace for all ships in the Gulf's international waters.

The French have suggested that Western navies broaden their protective efforts to permit all warships to respond to "Mayday" calls from any neutral ship under threat or attack in international waters.

The London-based Economist endorsed the French view, arguing: "Not to protect them, when the means are at hand to do so, is a craven cop-out."

Shipping executives complain that Western warships protect only their own national flagged shipping. They say other international shipping from Liberia, Greece, Norway, and Panama, to name a few, continues to be attacked at will by Iranian gunboats and Revolutionary Guards. The Iranians wait until warships are well out of range to launch attacks against unescorted shipping.

The answer for some shipowners has been to shift the registration of their tanker or freighters to a country that provides naval protection in the Gulf. The Brit-

ish dependencies of Hong Kong, Gibraltar, and the Bahamas have received applications from ship owners seeking British warship protection.

Others in the shipping industry say it is a matter of international law and principle.

"In the old days any naval force was considered a policeman of the seas," says a shipping official with years of experience in the Gulf. He complains, "Now, the policeman stands on the other side of the road and says I can't help you."

In the meantime, the attacks on shipping continue.

"We are under attack, we are under attack by unknown force 12 miles West of Dubai," shouted the British captain of the Panamanian tanker Tavistock recently.

More than 100 miles away in the Gulf of Oman his 2:51 am plea for help blared out of a speaker in the bridge of the Battleaxe. It would later become apparent that the attacking vessel was the Iranian frigate Sabalan.

"What we need is the Navy," the tanker captain pleaded on the open channel. "What we need is the Navy here."

The Christian Science Monitor News Service.



By Ashraf Fouad

BAHRAIN, (Reuters): Saudi Arabia's surprise purchase of Chinese ground-to-air missiles is a clear warning to Iran not to extend the "war of the cities" beyond Iraqi targets, diplomats in the region said.

The weapons deal with Peking is also seen as a slap in the face to the United States, Riyadh's key ally, after a string of arms purchases were blocked by pro-Israeli lobbyists in Congress.

Despite concern in Israel and thinly-veiled warnings from an aide to Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir against deployment, the diplomats do not believe the missiles were bought for use against Israel, the Arab world's traditional enemy.

Saudi Arabia last Saturday confirmed it had bought an undisclosed number of medium-range missiles from China, a nation which it does not even officially recognise.

"The missiles are not aimed Israel's way," said one Gulf-based diplomat. "Saudi Arabia is building up its defences in general and the weapon is a deterrent against any potential threat from the Iran-Iraq war."

Iran and Iraq have rained what are believed to be Soviet Scud-B missiles on each other's capitals since the war of the cities

Saudi missile deal with Peking sends warning to Iran and US

re-erupted on Feb 27 after nearly a year of an informal truce in attacks against civilians.

The diplomats said Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are increasingly worried Tehran might escalate the conflict by going for targets outside Iraqi borders.

"Kuwait certainly has good reason to be worried Iran might send a missile in its direction," said one diplomat.

Ironically, it was Chinese-built "Silkworm" missiles that Iran fired at Kuwaiti oil installations and tankers last year as the shipping war flared. Saudi Arabia was believed to have made its annoyance with Peking clearly felt at the time.

Kuwait has since strengthened its anti-missile defences but diplomats said Riyadh also wanted to plug a gap in its arsenal and send a clear warning to Tehran.

"It does not seem like the Saudis to come out and trumpet it all over the place," said another diplomat. "Their message to the Americans is: 'Do not take us for granted. If you don't give us what we want we will look elsewhere.' Saudi Arabia has said the

Chinese CSS-2 type missiles do not carry nuclear warheads and will be deployed for defence reasons because of instability in the Middle East.

But the missiles' 2,000-mile (3,200-km) range gives Riyadh the capability of striking deep into Iran. Tehran is only about 600 miles (960 km) away from a key Saudi military base.

By contrast, one diplomat said, Israel is within a "stone's throw" of Saudi borders and Saudi Arabia would have no need for Chinese missiles if it wished to reach Israeli targets.

Training
Eilat, Israel's only outlet to the Red Sea, is within sight of Saudi territory.

Diplomats said Saudi Arabia appeared not to have approached its traditional Western allies to seek missiles before turning to Peking, probably anticipating a rebuff by Washington.

The move was surprising in the sense that Saudi Arabia, home of Islam's holiest shrines, views communism as atheistic and has no formal diplomatic ties with Peking or Moscow. Riyadh still views Taiwan as the legitimate

government of China.

A high-ranking Taiwanese military delegation toured Saudi bases last week and some diplomats believe the missiles deal includes on-the-spot training by Chinese experts.

That, they believe, would be the first time Saudi Arabia's military forces received training from a communist state.

Diplomats say Riyadh has recently softened its stance against Peking and Moscow, contacting both as part of a Gulf drive to rally support for last year's United Nations Iran-Iraq war ceasefire call. Trade ties have also been growing steadily.

US arms sales to Arab states have always faced an uphill struggle in Congress from Israel's supporters who fear weapons could be used against Israel.

With tension running high in the Arab world over other the Palestinian uprising in Israeli-occupied territories, US missiles deal would almost certainly have been a non-starter while Secretary of State George Shultz is trying to broker a Middle East peace plan.

Nicaragua accord based on disillusion with superpowers

By Mathew Campbell

MANAGUA, (Reuters): Nicaragua's left-wing government and US-backed rebels have reached a preliminary peace accord based partly on the realisation that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union makes a dependable ally, diplomats say.

Approving the accord on Wednesday, government and rebel leaders expressed weariness with the war, agreeing the time had come for Nicaraguans to settle the dispute on their own.

"In this conflict, which has been imposed on Nicaragua, the victims are Nicaraguans, the dead, the wounded, the mutilated are Nicaraguans," President Daniel Ortega said.

Rebel leader Adolfo Calero said the accord, which provides for a 60-day truce starting on April 1 pending more talks on a

permanent ceasefire, was made "for the good of Nicaragua."

The accord coincided with setbacks suffered in the war by the Contra rebels, whose number is estimated at 12,000.

They have blamed their misfortunes on the United States, which has funded them on and off since 1981. The US Congress recently cut off supplies despite strong White House lobbying.

Discontent
The government, which has been backed by the Soviet Union, was facing its worst economic crisis and growing public discontent. Government officials said privately they were concerned Moscow did not care.

Diplomats saw the accord as a blow to US policy in Nicaragua. The White House claims the ruling Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) is a communist dictatorship that cannot be trusted to keep any bargain.

In signing the accord, the rebels appeared to be acting independently of their main backers. They agreed not to request any more military aid at the same time as President Reagan was portraying such aid as vital in his campaign to persuade Congress to reverse its rejection of further assistance to the Contras.

A big Sandinista offensive against the rebels on the northern Honduran border last week drove home the government's message that if the Contras did not talk peace, they could face complete military defeat.

Concessions
Both sides made concessions in the accord. But diplomats expressed surprise the Contras had withdrawn demands for sweeping political and military reforms made in previous talks, including a call for the reconstitution of the Sandinista Army.

"They went for the best deal they could get right now," said one European diplomat.

The agreement implied the Contras believed they could co-exist with the Sandinistas, despite warnings from Washington that there can be no real democracy with the FSLN in power.

The accord provides for reintegration of Contra guerrillas into society, allowing them to take part in political life.

A permanent truce is to be agreed once a special commission has verified that all the provisions of a regional peace agreement signed in Guatemala

last year have been implemented.

The Guatemala Accord calls for elections in accordance with each country's constitutional timetable, allowing Nicaragua's Ortega to stay in power until 1990.

Government concessions included allowing the immediate return of thousands of political exiles and the release of 100 political prisoners immediately, and others after the rebels have moved into special ceasefire zones.

The rest will be freed only when a definitive truce is agreed. The rebels had previously demanded immediate and total amnesty for the 3,300 political prisoners.

Nicaragua has already taken several steps towards liberalisation under the Guatemala accord. But its most dramatic concession was agreeing to meet the rebels on its own soil.

Diplomats saw the process as a shift in the direction of the left-wing revolution that ousted the late US-backed dictator Anastasio Somoza in 1979.

The war between the Sandinistas and the Contras has claimed over 50,000 Nicaraguan victims since 1981 and brought the country close to economic ruin.

The government recently applied what it called a "shock therapy" to the economy, issuing a new currency to help curb inflation. The economic moves have fuelled popular discontent.

Officials said privately that despite the economic crisis, the Soviet Union had offered no significant aid and the government was concerned that it could no longer count on its ally to help subsidise the revolution.

Opposition leader

PANAMA CITY, March 25, (AP): An opposition leader returned to Panama vowing to rid the nation of military strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, whose cash-strapped government faces payday for its soldiers today.

Ricardo Arias Calderon, head of the Christian Democratic Party, arrived yesterday to find Panama in the midst of an anti-Noriega general strike, now in its fifth day, which has shut down more than 90 per cent of business and industry.

Noriega is the country's de facto leader by virtue of his influence as chief of the 15,000-strong defence forces.

Nepal: order amid the peaks and problems

By G. G. Labelle

KATHMANDU, Nepal, (AP): "Speak the truth, perform your dharmas, do not fall from self-study," says one of the many red and yellow signs sprinkled about Kathmandu. They are directives for discipline from Nepal's monarch.

And the "dharmas" — or cosmic order — remains largely undisturbed in Nepal.

Tourists come and spend money. King Birendra is greeted by the national anthem "May glory crown our illustrious sovereign" on public occasions, and foreign aid comes pouring in.

Only rarely is the harmony upset. In the past few months, the only public dissent has been criticism by a few outspoken public officials, later suspended from their jobs, and failed general strike.

But beside Nepal's tranquility and breathtaking mountains, half the 17 million people live in poverty, only 2 per cent have sanitary sewage disposal and more than 70 per cent have no

safe drinking water. A Nepalese born today has an average life expectancy of 47 years.

Some blame lack of progress on meagre resources or the country's political structure — all political parties are banned. Not even massive foreign aid, with a half-billion dollars offered this year, makes much of a dent in Nepal's troubles.

Not all the statistics are depressing. Life expectancy at birth is up from 38 years in 1960. Some 70,000 Nepalese are receiving university education. Tourism grew 23 per cent last year, to 223,000 visitors.

But the population keeps rising. It is expected to jump to 24 million by the year 2000, and food production can't match it. World Bank figures show Nepal's farms produced 106 per cent of food needs in 1960. But now it's only 86 per cent.

Despite efforts to add jobs for more people, the wealthiest fifth of the population takes in 60 per cent of the private income. The bottom fifth has under 5 per cent. Per capita annual income is \$160.

Harka Gurung, a former cabinet minister, also noted that only about 60 per cent of the foreign aid offered can be absorbed because of the few technical skills and the mountain barriers.

"Even if you have resources, how do you deliver in such a terrain?" he asked.

Half the population lives in the so-called Middle Hills — between the mountain peaks and the flatlands bordering India — and cannot be reached easily by roads, irrigation or social services.

Development

"Shortage of food and surplus of population has always been a problem in the Middle Hills," Gurung said. "Now they have reached a saturation point. They can't support any more people."

A geographer by education, Gurung said Nepal's landlocked position between giants India and China also blocks development. The country's best undeveloped resource is hydropower from its rivers, but the only possible customer is India.

Shilendra Kumar Upadhyay, minister for foreign

affairs and land reform, said India wants electricity but "at their price."

Nepal needs industrial development and irrigation along with hydropower, but Gurung said that would cost more.

India also has come to dominate Nepal's two growth industries, tourism and garment making. Indians are said to own or control much of Nepal's cash economy.

Several foreigners and Nepalese — all asking that their names not be used — also say Nepal is plagued by the corruption common in Third World countries and its government machinery is not up to the problem.

In Nepal, the king is advised by the *rastriya panchayat*, or non-partisan parliament. Political parties were outlawed in 1961. The parliament has 112 elected members and 28 appointed by the king, with the prime minister chosen by the members.

Despite the constitutional intricacies, no one doubts that the king is really in charge.

TODAY IN HISTORY

1495 — Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian appeals to German princes at Diet of Worms to check progress of French in Italy.
1793 — Holy Roman Empire declares war on France; French royalists revolt in La Vendee.
1820 — Individual liberties are curtailed in France.
1854 — Charles III, duke of Parma, is murdered.
1895 — Japan occupies Pescadores Islands in Formosa Strait.
1913 — More than 1,400 people perish in floods in US states of Ohio, Indiana and Texas.
1926 — Romania and Poland form an alliance.
1931 — Treaty of Friendship is signed between Iraq and Transjordan.
1953 — US Dr Jonas E. Salk announces new vaccine to immunize against polio.
1970 — Foreign ministers of Islamic countries decide at Jordan meeting to establish permanent secretariat.
1971 — Pakistan is reported on verge of civil war as President Yahya Khan outlaws rebellious Awami League.
1975 — South Vietnamese government announces arrest of several people for plotting to overthrow President Nguyen Van Thieu.
1986 — Libyan radio calls for Arab suicide squads to strike US embassies and other interests "wherever they may be."
1987 — Six refugees are killed when fighting breaks out between Palestinian commandos and militiamen in south Beirut.

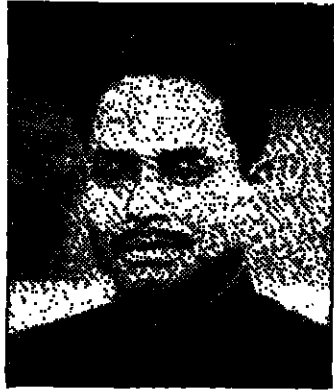
BANGLADESH

INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL DAY

AN ARAB TIMES SUPPLEMENT

"ON the auspicious occasion of the 17th anniversary of our Independence I extend my heartfelt felicitations to all my countrymen, both at home and abroad."

Bangladesh given a new sense of direction



President Hussain Muhammad Ershad

"Independence was not a gift for us. Our long cherished desire for a sovereign and independent homeland culminated into the glorious War of Independence. At the cost of immense sacrifices Bangladesh emerged in the map of the free world. I, on behalf of my countrymen and on behalf of myself, recall with gratitude the supreme sacrifices made by the valiant martyrs and pay our glowing tributes to them."

"Our Independence Day is not merely a day of celebration. It is also a day of stock-taking. It calls for recounting the past, critical examination of the present and for taking a fresh view to make the independence truly meaningful."

"The main objective of our independence was to establish a just, democratic and exploitation-free society. For the last six years we have been striving to attain that objective."

"We have achieved sig-

nificant success and progress in all sectors of our national life. The nation has been given a new sense of direction and a new dynamism has been infused in our development efforts through the implementation of people-oriented reforms and revolutionary programmes. This has been

possible through the sincere and hard work of all strata of our people.

"The recently concluded elections to the fourth Jatiya Sangsad have further consolidated our democratic aspirations. The free, fair and peaceful holding of the polls is a shining testimony of the political sagacity and consciousness of our people."

"The process of rapid industrialisation has gained momentum with the creation of a congenial climate for public and private investment. Due incentives have been provided for foreign participation in industrial sector."

"Bangladesh now occupies a position of honour and respect in the comity of nations. We have endeavoured to promote wider bilateral, regional and international cooperation to accelerate our development process. We believe in the policy of friendship and

cooperation to all for attaining lasting and meaningful peace based on equity and justice."

"Bangladesh is a land of 104 million people with vast potentials. Let us maintain a peaceful and stable atmosphere in the society and work with dedication, devotion and patriotism. I am sure that the people of all walks of life will contribute to that end."

"Bangladeshis living abroad are our ambassadors of goodwill and amity. I hope they will continue to play their role in further strengthening the economy of the country and in projecting the country to the world in its true perspective."

"On this auspicious occasion let us take a solemn pledge to dedicate ourselves in materialising the dreams of millions of martyrs. This will be our best homage to them."

"I wish all my countrymen continued success, happiness and prosperity."

— Message of President Hussain Muhammad Ershad.

Bangladesh at a glance

Location: Between 20°34' and 26°38' North Latitude and 88°01' and 92°41' East Longitude

Area: 55,598 sq miles (144,000 sq km)

Rainfall: Lowest-50 " and highest-200"

Forest area: 8,608 sq miles (15 per cent of total area)

Population: About 104 million with annual growth rate of 2.8 per cent. Density per square mile is about 1,500.

Urban population 8.78 per cent. Rural population 91.22 per cent.

Number of villages: 68,018

Capital: Dhaka (present area 101 sq miles, 414 sq km) plan 300 sq miles (777 sq km)

State language: Bangla (Bengali) English is also widely spoken and understood

Literacy: 24.3 per cent.

Principal rivers: Meghna, Padma, Brahmaputra, Jamuna, Teesta, Surma and Karnaphuli

Major crops: Jute, rice, tea, tobacco, sugarcane and pulses

Major industries: Jute, sugar, paper, textile, fertilizer, steel, cement, newsprint, pharmaceuticals, shipbuilding, electrical manufacturing, leather and silk

Seaports: Chittagong and Chalna

Airports: Dacca, Chittagong, Jessore, Ishwardi, Sylhet, Cox's Bazar, Comilla and Thakurgaon.

Best tourist season: October to March

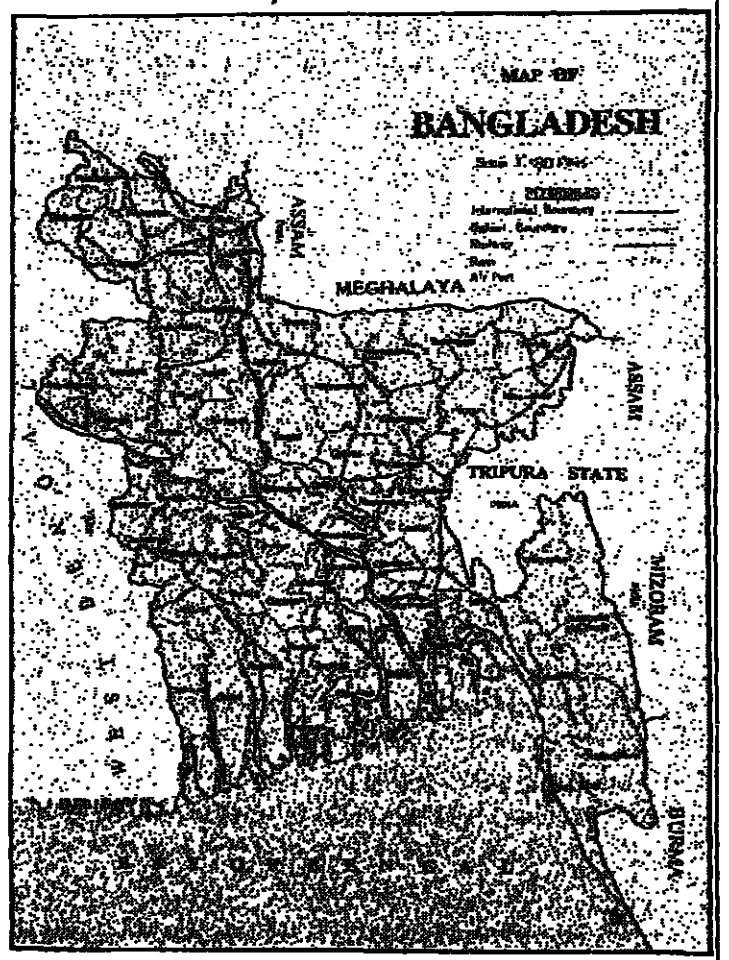
Handicraft and souvenirs: Pinkpearl, muslin, jute products including carpets, silver filigree works, cane and conchshell products, handloom fabric, doll and terracotta toys

Waterways: 5,240 miles during monsoon 3,245 miles during dry season

Railways: 1,786 miles

Paved roads: 6,880 miles

Bangladesh time: 6 hours ahead of GMT



ON THE auspicious occasion of the 17th anniversary of our independence, and on our National Day, I extend my heartfelt felicitations to all my countrymen, both at home and abroad, and join them in paying our highest tribute to the martyrs of the War of Liberation."

By the Grace of Almighty Allah, Bangladesh has been able to attain a position of honour and respect in the comity of nations. This has been possible through the dynamic leadership of President Hossain Muhammad Ershad.

"In our international relations, we have remained ever vigilant to defend our sovereignty, independence and

Balanced foreign policy

territorial integrity. Our foreign policy is positive, balanced and moderate. We have endeavoured to promote wider bilateral, regional and international cooperation to speed up our development process."

"We believe in the policy of friendship and cooperation with all other nations of the world for attaining a lasting and meaningful peace based on equity and justice."

"At home we have attained considerable progress in developing the national economy to eradicate poverty and to ensure social justice. Bangladesh

is living abroad have made important contributions to this process and we are proud of them. The policy of friendship that Bangladesh follows can be effectively pursued through the initiatives and good work of our citizens living abroad. I pray to Almighty Allah for their well being and prosperity."

"I wish all my countrymen further success and happiness."

— Message of Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Foreign Minister.



Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh

Excellent relations

"ON the solemn occasion of 17th anniversary of Bangladesh Independence Day we remember with profound respect the national heroes who made the supreme sacrifice in 1971 for the independence of Bangladesh."

"I also wish to warmly greet all Bangladeshis — workers, doctors, engineers, teachers and journalists who are working in Kuwait. By their discipline, conduct and hard work they have earned a good name for their country and for themselves. I am sure, they will continue their good work and give good account of themselves."

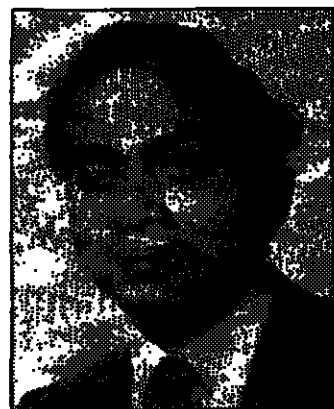
"Bangladesh has not only a large qualified manpower but also enormous primary and industrial resources some of which are exported to other countries including Kuwait. Bangladeshis jute and jute goods, leather and leather goods, garments, tea, fish, vegetables and fruits have world-wide market because of their high quality. It is heartening that some of our products

are greatly valued in markets here."

"Bangladesh offers an excellent opportunity to foreign investors for secure and profitable investment. The people are cooperative, hospitable and trustworthy. Government has enacted legislation ensuring attractive terms for foreign investments, either independently or through joint ventures, on mutually beneficial terms and conditions."

"With many rivers, forests, small mountains, long sea-beaches, picturesque landscapes and historical sites, Bangladesh is a veritable tourist attraction. Good hotels, motels and various other facilities offered the tourists make travelling and sight-seeing in Bangladesh easy and comfortable. A new nation with an old civilisation and rich Islamic heritage, Bangladesh has many historical monuments and mosques."

"Bangladesh and Kuwait have excellent brotherly relations which are based on strong foundations and Islamic



K.M. Shehabuddin, Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait

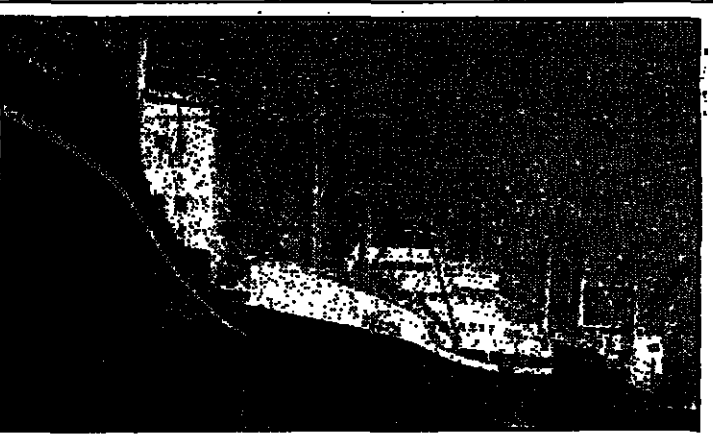
values. Both countries have stood by each other in difficult times. Kuwait's spontaneous moral and material support to Bangladesh during the last year's devastating floods has left a lasting impression on our people. We pray to Allah for the continued peace, stability and prosperity of Kuwait and for the steady growth of the existing friendly relations between our two countries. Under the wise and dynamic leadership of His Highness the Amir, Kuwait

has immensely contributed to world peace and security, and to the stability and progress of Islamic countries. As chairman of the OIC, Kuwait is currently playing role on all issues touching the Islamic Ummah."

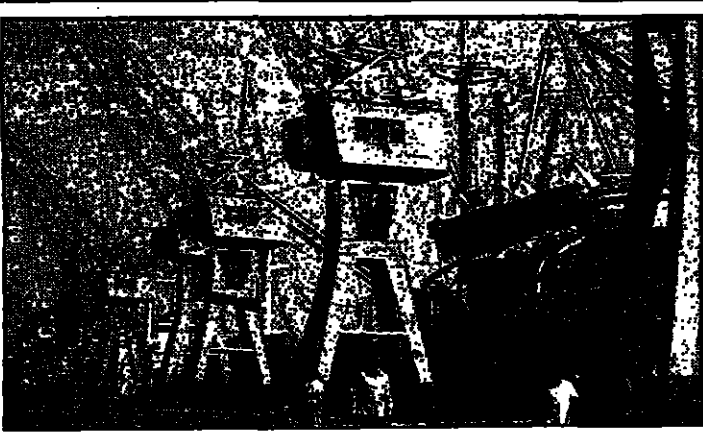
"For the last few years under the able leadership of President Hossain Muhammad Ershad Bangladesh has been enjoying stability and steady economic development despite many handicaps. The President's personal concern for the welfare of the common people, the decentralisation of the administration and judiciary, land reforms and population control have brought benefits to the country. Bangladesh's principled and non-aligned foreign policy with special emphasis on the development of relations with the Islamic world has earned it a place of trust and honour in the comity of nations."

"Long live Bangladesh — Kuwait friendship."

— Message of K. M. Shehabuddin, Ambassador.



The infrastructural and other facilities available in the Export Processing Zone in Chittagong have made it Asia's low-cost production base.



Export Processing Zones to activate industrial growth

Open-door policy for investors

BANGLADESH, the largest deltaic zone of the world, is richly endowed with nature's gifts. The land is green and covered in a lush vegetation reaching down to the azure waters of the Bay of Bengal in the south.

Though a delta, her inhabitants are not of recent origin. The nation has a proud and glorious history. The people are endowed with rare qualities of forbearance, love and compassion, imagination, zeal and enterprise."

"Bangladesh is traditionally famous for 'jute' known world wide as 'golden fibre'. Other products such as tea, leather, seafoods are also important exports. In this energy-conscious world Bangladesh is fortunate to have reserves of natural gas."

Bangladesh has a unique geographical location. Situated as a bridge between South Asia and South-East Asia, Bangladesh also served as the gateway for a vast land-locked region of the South Asian Sub-continent, with a density of 1703 people per square mile.

This population also constitutes a great concentration of consumers — a potentially massive market for the manufacturing industries."

Thus, the Export Processing Zones in Bangladesh have economic prospects far beyond the apparent geographical scope of the country and even further possibilities will unveil with the geo-economic developments of South Asia and South East Asia."

The Government attitude to the whole idea of an Export Processing Zone is to activate industrial growth for exports through participation of foreign investment. The creation of employment, technology, regional development,

etc., are the major components in this plan.

The objectives are: a) To foster and generate the economic development of Bangladesh by encouraging, and promoting foreign investments in a zone.

b) To diversify the sources of foreign exchange earnings by increasing the export of Bangladesh through a zone;

An open door policy exist for foreign investors who wish to set up export-oriented industries in the Export Processing Zone. Joint ventures or foreign investment to the extent of 100% foreign ownership are allowed in the zone.

Capital formation is generally low and technical know-how limited in Bangladesh. The Bangladeshis are recognised as very intelligent people and can be turned into most productive and at the same time least demanding labour force. Export Processing Zones are, therefore, suited to conditions in Bangladesh for development of export-oriented industries base in view of infrastructural facilities and abundance of trained and easily trainable labour force.

The cost of production in Bangladesh is still one of the lowest in the world. With this perspective, under the umbrella of the Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority, the first EPZ has now been established in the port city of Chittagong known as Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ).

The Zone is only 2.41 km from the Chittagong sea port and 7.25 km from the Chittagong international airport and from the Agrabad Commercial Area, the main business centre of the city.

The master plan of the CEPZ was drawn on 266 hectares with

provision for future expansion to 405 hectares. The implementation of the project has been planned in phases. The first phase of physical development including infrastructural facilities and related services was completed in June 1985. The second phase of infrastructural development of the Chittagong EPZ started from the financial year 1985-86.

There has been considerable enthusiasm on the part of foreign investors to set up manufacturing plants in the Chittagong EPZ. Obviously the products are designed for export due to favourable investment conditions in the Zone and the competitive advantages which Bangladesh enjoys.

At present 7 industries are operating in the Zone and another 8 are in various stages of implementation. Industries with 100 per cent foreign ownership and joint ventures involving foreign and local partners regardless of the equity participation are allowed to be set up in the Zone.

The infrastructural and other facilities available in the CEPZ have made the Zone "Asia's low cost production base." The facilities may be summarised as follows:

a) Inexpensive labour force:

The availability of an inexpensive, trained and easily trainable labour force permits production at a comparatively low cost. Owing to lack of employment opportunities in the country, a large number of professionally qualified engineers, accountants, management and supervisory personnel, technicians and skilled

labourers having adequate knowledge of English as a working language go to foreign countries for employment or remain unemployed.

They may be profitably utilised by the EPZ enterprises. From the experience that we have from the factories that are now operating in EPZ, there is enough evidence to show that labour productivity in CEPZ is very high and it has already been recognised by the operators of factories themselves.

b) Land/factory space: Fully developed industrial plots with adequate infrastructure are leased out to the prospective investors. Initial lease of 30 years, renewable. Annual rent is US\$ 1,000 per sq. metre.

There are warehouses and a number of standard factory buildings are under construction for lease or sale to prospective investors.

c) Utilities:

1. Water: abundant water is supplied by the Chittagong Water and Sewage Authority but the administration is handled by the Zone management.

2. Electricity: adequate power is available in CEPZ supplied from the national grid by the Greater Chittagong Power Development Project.

3. Gas: natural gas pipeline runs along the developed plots of the Zone and only needs to be tapped.

d) Telecommunication facilities:

Comprehensive telecommunication facilities are offered to the Zone enterprises. A satellite earth station is in operation at Betbunia and international telephone communication through direct dialing is available. There is also a nationwide dialing system for the country.

e) Fiscal incentives:

1. Duty free imports of machinery, equipment and raw materials.

2. Five year tax holiday. After expiry of initial 5 years, a rebate of 50 per cent of income tax on export sales are allowed. For certain industries tax

holiday upto 10 years may be allowed.

3. Exemptions of income tax on salary of foreign technicians upto 3 years.

4. Exemption of income tax on interest on borrowed capital.

5. Relief from double taxation in case of foreign investors from countries with whom Bangladesh has agreement to that effect.

6. Partial exemption from dividend tax during the tax holiday period. Full exemption

of dividend tax will be allowed to foreign investment only.

7. Duty free import of food-stuff and beverages for foreign employees within the Zone.

f. Other facilities and incentives:

(1) One window service — the investors will now deal with only one organisation the Export Processing Zone Authority.

(2) Financing and banking: (a) Local bank financing are available to joint venture projects for development of

infrastructure.

(b) Offshore banking facilities are available for all investors.

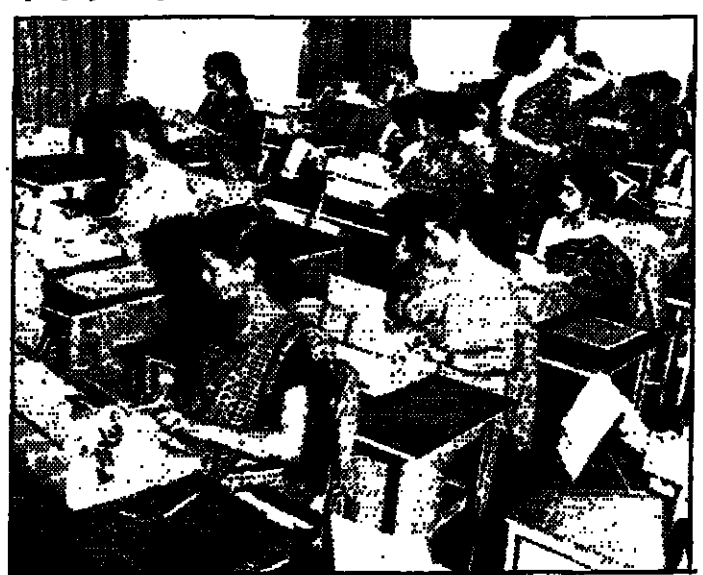
(3) Remittance of approval royalties and technical fees.

(4) Employment of foreign technicians wherever required.

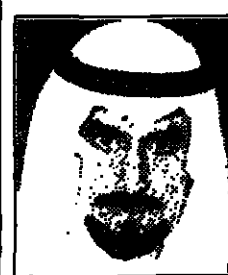
(5) Freedom from national import policy restrictions.

(6) OPIC's (Overseas Private Investment Corporation) USA insurance and finance programmes are operable.

(7) Relocation of existing industries from abroad.



The availability of an inexpensive trained and easily trainable labour force permits production at a comparatively low cost.



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Emphasis on multilateral diplomacy

Active role in international arena

By Anwarul Karim
Chowdhury

Director General (United Nations and Economic Affairs) Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

IN a statement before the Jatiyo Sangshad in July this year, the Foreign Minister of Bangladesh mentioned that the principal objectives of Bangladesh's foreign policy is to protect and promote the interests of Bangladesh in the outside world; to develop close and cooperative relations with other countries and international organisations based on mutual interest in accelerating the socio-economic development process in Bangladesh, to explore new areas of cooperation, particularly in the economic and commercial areas, and to ensure establishment of justice and equity in international relations.

If we follow the history of Bangladesh's external relations, these important objectives of our foreign policy are more appropriately reflected in the multilateral context. Bangladesh has endeavoured, since its independence, to play an active role in multilateral forms, particularly within the UN system.

This reflects Bangladesh's belief in the interdependence of nations and oneness of the global family. The Constitution of Bangladesh enshrines the country's commitment to the United Nations and the principles and purposes of its Charter.

Constraints

It is natural that a country like Bangladesh with serious economic constraints would pursue and promote its socio-economic interests through international diplomatic efforts, both bilateral and multilateral.

For a country like ours, which is economically less fortunate for a variety of reasons and which is not so well endowed with natural resources, her strength and bargaining power lies in joining hands with other developing countries of the world in the collective struggle for attaining their socio-economic objectives.

As an underdeveloped country with enormous national development problems, Bangladesh has been able to reap important benefits out of its active involvement in multilateral forums in support of its development efforts.

Given the resource and other constraints, promotion of effective bilateral relations with all or even most countries of the world is not possible on the part of Bangladesh and hence our emphasis is on multilateral diplomacy.

Bangladesh has been able to take considerable advantage out of its participation as a member of the Group of 77, Non-Aligned Movement, Organisation of Islamic Conference and the Commonwealth in addition to the UN.



President Ershad addresses the Sixth Asian Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 in Dhaka.

Conceptual basis of Bangladesh's policy towards multilateral cooperation for development was elucidated very effectively within a week of Bangladesh's entry into the United Nations on 17 September 1974 in her first major statement declaring that "No greater challenge has been faced by the United Nations than that of marshalling the forces of reason to bring about a just international economic order. This order must not only ensure sovereignty of each state over its natural resources but should also seek to establish a framework of international cooperation based upon recognition of the overriding common interest of the countries of the world in a stable and just economic system."

This commitment and conceptual focus have been reiterated and elaborated by Bangladesh at the United Nations and other multilateral forums at all levels to generate intensified global cooperation for development.

Bangladesh's role in international cooperation for development is generally focused in the following main areas: (a) Active participation in the activities of the Group of 77 in New York, Geneva, Nairobi and other UN centres; such involvement in the Group of 77 consisting of 127 developing countries meaning substantive contribution to its deliberations on various issues before the United Nations ranging from, say, new and renewable sources of energy to issues of money and finance to special economic assistance to countries in need. In this group, Bangladesh has always been a key performer.

(b) Role of spokesman of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in New York and in Geneva: Through our leadership of this group, Bangladesh has been the main driving force behind the promotion of the interests of the LDCs in all forums.

Increase in the quantum of

foreign assistance, conversion of foreign loans into grants, improvement in the terms of assistance provided, exchange compensation and other special measures for LDC etc. have been possible through our effective pursuit of LDCs interests.

(c) Bangladesh's special focus on the operational activities for development of the UN system: These activities are directly related to the development efforts in the developing countries like Bangladesh and, therefore, is a very clear and concrete manifestation of our success in attracting resources to support the country's development efforts. Our prominent profile in the activities of UNDP, Unicef, Unfpa, World Food Programme, International Fund for Agricultural Development and other operational bodies is reflective of this position.

(d) Bangladesh believes that promotion of closer South-South cooperation is in the larger interest of the developing countries in particular, and the world as a whole. We have, therefore, actively promoted the concept of RCDE, economic cooperation among developing countries, and taken steps, in concert with other developing countries, for its effective realisation. We are also involved actively in negotiations on the global system of trade preferences (GSTP) which was endorsed as a concept to promote greater and freer trade among developing countries through a Ministerial Declaration in New York in 1982 when Bangladesh was the Chairman of the Group of 77.

(e) In recent years Bangladesh has, in promoting international economic cooperation for development, stressed the importance of social development as an integral part of economic development process. We have made special efforts to highlight the need for greater focus

on the health, education, nutrition, population and other social aspects of development which become the first victims of any adjustment policy undertaken or imposed to tackle difficult economic situations — national or global. In this context, Bangladesh has also actively promoted the interests of women, children and youth in the United Nations and other forums. Bangladesh's clear stand particularly in the integration of women in development and enhancement of their role and status, have been particularly recognised. The leadership role of Bangladesh in promoting the welfare and well being of children to bring about a Child Survival and Development Revolution (CSDR) and in that context in the preparation of a UN Convention on the Rights of the Child have been highly appreciated.

The role played by Bangladesh in these areas gets mainly manifested in our activities within the UN system. However, it needs to be recognised that the Non-Aligned Movement, Organisation of Islamic Conference and the Commonwealth have accorded major emphasis to international cooperation for development. In these forums also, Bangladesh has taken keen interest in all development issues and has sought to promote coherent policies in support of international economic cooperation.

A very important recognition of Bangladesh's role in the international economic activities came through our election as Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York at the UN headquarters for one year in 1982-83.

THE agricultural sector of Bangladesh during the last four and a half years has shown a steady growth attaining higher production target. The contribution of the farm sector to the gross domestic product (GDP) continued to increase every year since 1982 and recorded a growth rate of 5 per cent in 1985-86.

The contribution of the agricultural sector to the gross domestic product valued at 1972-73 prices was Taka 38,102 million in 1981-82, Taka 39,893 million in 1982-83, Taka 41,329 million in 1983-84 and Taka 42,610 million in 1984-85. The food production rose to 16.3 million tons in 1985-86 from 15.832 million tons in 1984-85 and 15.471 million tons in 1983-84.

The vital role of agriculture in the economy of Bangladesh is evident from the fact that 85 per cent of the total population in the country depends on this sector directly or indirectly for their livelihood.

The contribution of the sector was estimated at 50.51 per cent of the gross domestic product during 1985-86, a progressively declining share which indicates the positive and rapid growth of the industrial sector, which however depends considerably on the supply of agricultural raw materials.

In spite of the top priority attached to the agricultural sector the country still has an annual food deficit of between 1.5 to two million tons. Therefore the present government attached special priority to the agricultural sector in the Third Five-Year Plan to attain food self-sufficiency within the plan period.

In order to boost agricultural production the Bangladesh government has been making an all out endeavour to ensure regular supply of agricultural inputs such as fertiliser, improved seeds, better irrigation facilities and agricultural credit. The use of fertiliser has increased substantially during this period and fertiliser production has also increased with the commissioning of new fertiliser factories.

As modern cultivation relies heavily on the chemical fertilisers for increasing productivity, the farmers have been motivated to use more of these to get higher yield. Incidentally, the per acre productivity in Bangladesh is still a lot lower than that of many developed and developing countries. The use of increased quantum of chemical fertilisers during the last four years indicates that the farmers are increasingly adopting modern methods in agriculture to attain higher productivity. The total distribution of fertilisers in 1982 was 829 million tons and the volume has been rising upward every year since then.

The fertiliser distribution was 969 million tons in 1982-83, in 1983-84 1.129 million tons, in 1984-85 1.260 million tons and in 1985-86 1.284

Agriculture on the upward swing



Eighty-five per cent of the population in Bangladesh depends on agriculture for their livelihood.

million tons. Improved quality seed is also one of the vital inputs for increasing the agricultural production. In order to increase the yield rate in the sector the government has been providing various types of improved seeds to the farmers every year at subsidised rates. During the year 1984-85 (July-March), paddy seeds, wheat seeds and potato seeds were distributed among the farmers.

Irrigation is the lifeline of modern agriculture. Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation is entrusted with the responsibility of providing irrigation facility to the farmers through low-lift pumps, deep tubewells and shallow tubewells. During the year 1985-86, 47,883 power pumps were used in irrigation. In 1983-84 only 43,615 power pumps were used for irrigation and in 1982-83 a total of 42,000 pumps used. The gradual increase in use of power pumps shows the enhanced emphasis on irrigating the land. The area under irrigation is also increasing fast since 1980. In 1980 total acreage under irrigation was only 3.6 million acres and it rose to 6.5 million acres in 1985-86. The irrigation will cover 9.2 million acres by the end of the current Third Five-Year Plan.

The existing acreage under irrigation in the country of about 22 million agricultural land testifies that Bangladesh agriculture is still heavily dependent on nature. Weather exerts the decisive influence on the agricultural productivity. The only way to fight this uncertainty and to insulate Bangladesh agriculture from the whims of nature is to expand the irrigation networks. The government intends to bring 19.2 million acres of land by the end of the Third Plan, which is likely to lead to augmented agricultural production.

With the modernisation of agriculture and the use of modern inputs, credit requirements have increased in the farm sector. The present government after assuming power in 1982 reviewed the whole credit system and adopted a scheme to provide liberal credit to the farmers. This is evident from the year to year

increase in disbursement of farm credit.

The total disbursement of agricultural credit in 1983-84 was taka 10,085 million which rose to Taka 11,500 million in 1984-85 and Taka 12,750 million in 1985-86 indicating the priority attention being paid to the advancement of agriculture in Bangladesh.

Emphasis is being laid on timely recovery of loans, considered essential for recycling funds to help the farmers to raise production. The agricultural loan procedure has been simplified and credit pass books introduced recently for enabling the farmers to get crop loan without any hurdles.

The present government undertook a number of reforms in various fields of the economy. The most important reform in the agricultural field is the land reform. "Land must belong to the tillers to provide him incentive for increased productivity" is the guiding philosophy. The government has fixed the ceiling of individual land ownership and made arrangement for distribution of the state-owned land to the landless farmers. Besides, the tenancy system has been changed so that the share croppers can give more attention to development of the land under their ploughs and its productivity.

Research

Agricultural research has been geared up simultaneously. The research activities of the Bangladesh Rice Research Institute and Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council has been intensified and the researches have evolved some high-yielding varieties of rice, jute and sugarcane conforming to international standards, and suited to the local climatic conditions in Bangladesh.

The extension work in the field of agriculture has been expanded so that the benefit of research work, reach the field level. Extension workers are also helping the farmers in guiding them and advising them how to use the modern inputs in agriculture.

The current Third Five-Year Plan of Bangladesh has attached the highest priority to

agriculture and rural development. Within the framework of the national plan objectives, agricultural development programme will pursue the following main objectives during the plan period:

(1) Supply of food cereals: The agricultural programmes envisage food self-sufficiency in 1989-90, accordingly the cereal food production has been set at 20.7 million tons. The programme provides for increased output of protein food, pulses, fish, oil seeds, vegetables, potato, sugarcane, milk and other dairy products.

(2) Expansion of employment opportunities: Agriculture employs about two thirds of the active labour force. The modern agricultural technology of water-seed-fertiliser being labour intensive technology can absorb more of the labour force on its expansion than now. The plan envisages to expand irrigated areas by 57 per cent. This increase is likely to increase the job opportunities in agriculture.

The Third Plan also envisages proper use of land and its conservation. The Third Plan will pursue the objective of conservation and enrichment of the valuable asset of the nation by shifting crop production from mono crop to multi-crop system, promotion of winter cultivation, reclamation of waste land, use of chemical fertiliser and maintenance of ecological balance.

For stabilisation of crop output the Third Plan of Bangladesh lays emphasis on integrated action plan on irrigation, flood control and drainage. Besides, the Third Five-Year Plan, assigned increased role to the private sector in agriculture during the plan period. In sale of fertiliser and irrigation equipment private sector has been given increased role to play in the agricultural sector besides setting up related agro-based industries.

It is expected that if all the objectives set in its current Third Five-Year Plan is realised, Bangladeshi agriculture will make a breakthrough and the nation's economy will gain a new momentum by the end of the plan period.

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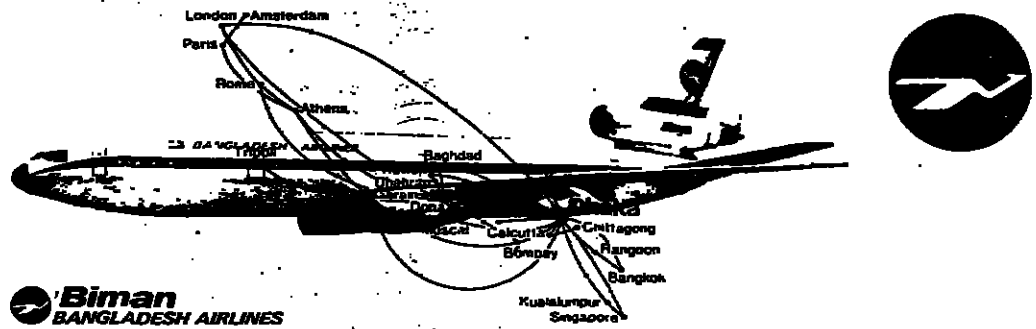
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مركز السفر

Biman flying high

BIMAN Bangladesh Airlines, besides its role as the national flag carrier, has also become directly involved in the development of tourism, said Biman's Manager in Kuwait, Shahjahan Khan.

Bangladesh is now poised for making good progress in tourism, Shahjahan Khan said.

Favourable condition within the country's major tourism related arms and the expectation of a high rate of growth in South Asia tourism in general indicate that good progress could now be made, he said.

He added Biman, the national airline, has begun to achieve service levels with a modern fleet that can be fairly compared with those of its immediate competitors.

"Biman's management is more heavily involved in international traffic than domestic."

Shahjahan said Biman's journey has been long and arduous. But, the experience gathered has been rewarding.

There is a feeling of quiet confidence that the worst is over and that a brave new world of hope and promise lies ahead.

Biman was founded as the flag carrier for a new nation in 1972, only a month after the war of liberation. It inherited an incomplete building as a base and a wealth of experience in 2,500 staff who had previously been with Pakistan International Airlines (PIA). There was no aircraft until a gift was received in the form of an old DC-3.

But soon, there were eight F-27s and a chartered Boeing 707 that operated on Dhaka-London route, the first international service. Today, the Biman fleet is still not big but comparatively modern and plans for further modernisation are in the process. There are three DC-10-30s, four Boeing 707s, two F28s and three F-27s.

Biman's international operations opened with London in March 1972, quickly followed by Calcutta, Bangkok, Kath-



Shahjahan Khan, manager, Bangladesh Biman Kuwait.

mandu and Dubai in 1974. Two years later, Bombay, Karachi and Abu Dhabi joined the network. Singapore in 1977 was followed by Amsterdam, Doha and Jeddah a year later. In 1979 Kuala Lumpur, Muscat, Tripoli and Athens were added. Other destinations — Rangoon, Tokyo (now suspended), Dhahran, Kuwait, Rome, Baghdad, Paris and Bahrain were brought on lines since 1980.

The airline has now eight domestic and 24 international destinations across three continents: Asia, Europe and Africa.

A significant turn around for Biman came in late 1983 with the induction of wide-bodied DC-10-30s to the fleet. This single measure ushered in a new era for Biman. Acquisition and operation of wide-bodied aircraft not only elevated Biman to the family of modern carriers but also enabled it to offer a product similar to those of its competitors world over. The induction of the wide-bodied aircraft in the fleet of Biman became possible because of the interest taken by President Ershad.

In 1972-73, the first year of its operation, Biman had carried 3,84,072 passengers and earned a revenue of Tk 79 million.

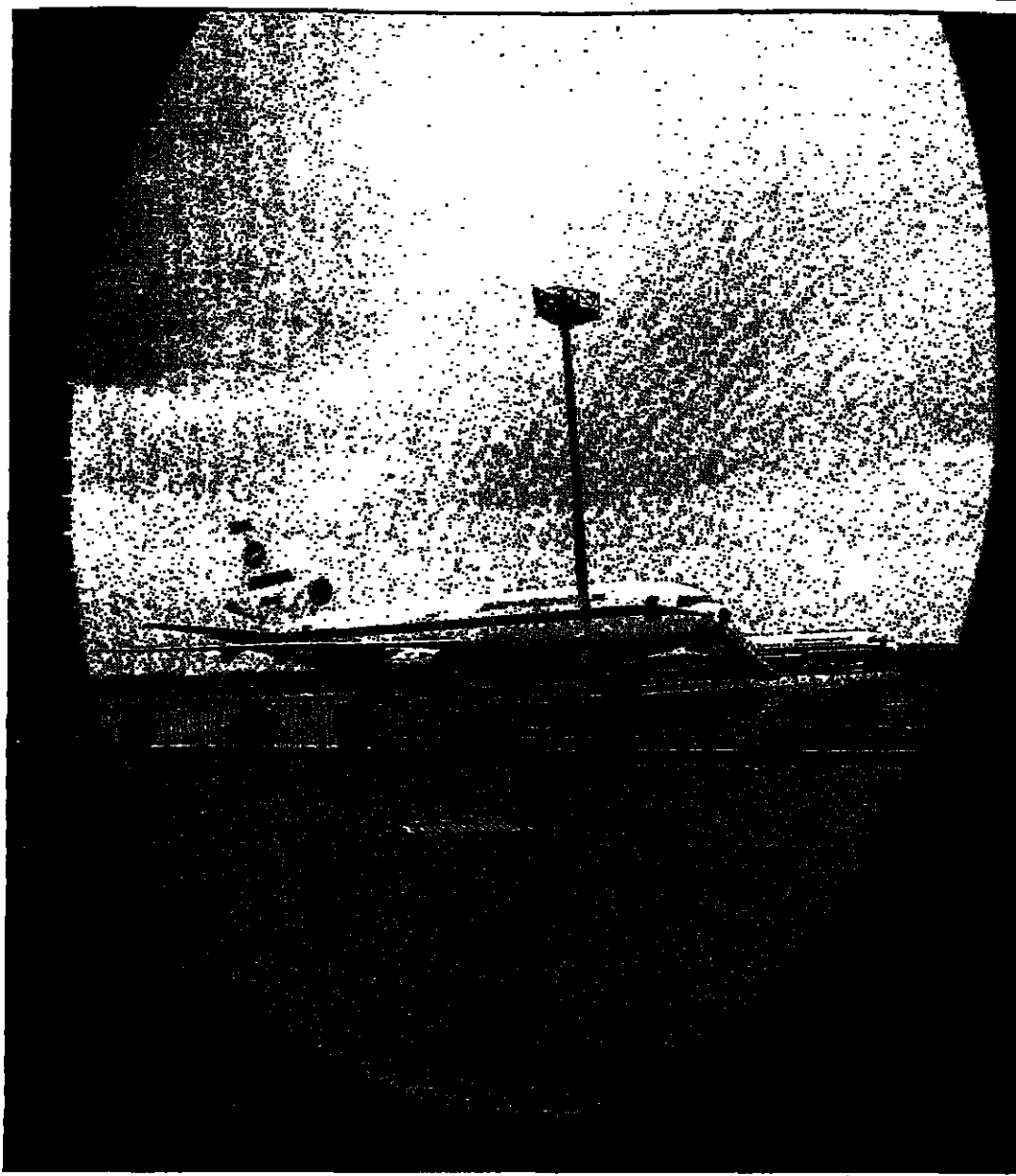
Since then, with the enlargement of fleet and expansion of route, Biman's traffic and revenue have also increased steadily. During 1985-86 (fiscal year) the passenger traffic of the airline rose to 8,43,000 and the revenue to Tk 4,320 million, according to provisional estimates.

In the area of passenger growth, one significant factor has been noticed in recent times. Initially, the airline had almost entirely depended on ethnic traffic. Now while the ethnic traffic still continues to remain the mainstay of Biman, the proportion of non-ethnic traffic has registered a substantial growth.

In 1985-86 the airline registered a growth of 20 per cent in the European sector, 15 per cent in South East Asia and 14 per cent in the South Asian sectors as compared with the previous year. Overall, during 1985-86, Biman has achieved a growth of 15 per cent in passenger traffic, 30 per cent in cargo carriage and 17 per cent in revenue earnings over 1984-85.

One of the major factors of Biman's excellent performance during the past few years is its greatly improved schedule regularity, the weakest point of the carrier prior to introduction of DC-10-30. Despite increase in number of flights by about 14 per cent and various other problems, the airline averaged a schedule regularity of 81.9 per cent in 1985-86 against 73.2 per cent in 1984-85 and 72.3 per cent in 1983-84. The management has made regularity of flight its operational priority number one and its directive flights have to depart on time is producing results. The schedule regularity coupled with better aircraft, has given Biman the most sought after asset — the public confidence.

Biman and Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation are jointly marketing package tours to and from many cities in the world. As an airline in the region of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc), it has also joined hands with



Bangladesh Biman has begun to achieve service levels with a modern fleet that can be fairly compared with those of its immediate competitors.

other airlines of the region to promote tourism here. The main opportunity for Bangladesh in international tourism "lies in its natural and cultural heritage," Shahjahan Khan said.

In cooperation with BPC, Biman has arranged for its passengers package tours of Dhaka city.

Tour A includes: Gulshan, the residence and offices of diplomats — Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, designed by the famous American architect Louis I.

Kahn and where our Parliament House is situated — Dhaka University, our highest seat of learning — the Curzon Hall, named after Lord Curzon, now houses the science faculty of the Dhaka University — Suhrawardy Uddyan, now a lush green garden, where the oath for the liberation was taken in March 1971 — Old High Court Building, originally built as the residence of the British Governor — Baitul Mukarram, our National mosque, a prototype of the

Holy Kaaba — Motijheel Commercial Area, country's busiest commercial centre.

Tour B, apart from the places in Tour A, adds to the tour either the Sadarghat river terminal, giving a busy look of the river Buriganga and Bahadur Shah Park, which contains the historical monument erected in memory of the martyrs of the war of 1857 against the British rule or the historic Lalbagh Fort, built in 1678 AD, by the Mughals and the National Museum, if open.

Opportunities galore for tourists



A motor-cruise on Kaptai Lake, Chittagong, is a rewarding experience.

BANGLADESH, as a vacation land, has many facets. Tourist attractions include archaeological sites, monuments, tourist resorts, beaches, historic and modern cities. To a lover of sports and outdoor activities, Bangladesh offers opportunities for angling, water-skiing, river-cruising, hiking, rowing, surfing, yachting, sun-bathing as well as bringing one close to mother nature. She is also rich in wild life and game birds. An ornithologist will find his visit rewarding. The following are some of the important places.

Dhaka

Founded in 1608 as the seat of the Imperial Mughal Viceroy of Bengal and known the world over for centuries for its fine muslin and silk, Dhaka has now grown into a bustling city of over 2.5 million people and serves as the capital of Bangladesh.

Some of its outstanding ancient monuments are Lalbagh Fort (built in 1678 A.D.), Faribibi's Tomb (1678 A.D.), Bara Katra, Hussaini Dalan, Star Mosque, Satgambuz (seven-domed) Mosque (1680 A.D.) and Dhakeshwari Temple. The Central Shaheed Minar commemorating the martyrs of the historic Language Movement of 1952, the Bahadur Shah Park guarding the memorial for the heroes of the First Indian war of Independence of 1857, the Dhaka Museum housing an excellent collection of archaeological finds, sculptures and paintings and the Balda Gardens rank high among places of interest.

The neighbourhood of Dhaka also claims attention for its rich heritage. The ruins of the old seats of power at Vikrampur (7th century A.D.) and Sonargaon (10th century A.D.), only an hour's drive away, are worth visiting. A day-trip to suburban Savar (national Martyrs Memorial), the forests of Joydevpur, Chandre or Shalna and the industrial estates at Narayanganj, Demre, Tongi and Tejgaon is a rewarding experience. A cruise in a countryboat in one of the nearby rivers is likely to bring mental peace and joy. Shopping around can get you excellent bargains. And who can miss the pink river pearls or the found Jamdani saris of Dhaka.

Chittagong

With a picturesque hinterland of large hill-forests and lakes Chittagong, the second largest city of Bangladesh and a busy international seaport, is a good vacation spot. Its fine harbour, green hills, forests and sea-beaches and soothing sun-

shine attract holiday makers to swim in the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal, bask in the sun, fish in the lakes and rivers and shoot with camera in the game-filled forests. Described by the Chinese poet-traveller Hsuan Tsan (7th century A.D.) as "a sleeping beauty emerging from mist and water" and given the nick-name of 'Porto Grande' (Grand Port) by the 16th century Portuguese seafarers, Chittagong remains true to both descriptions even today. It combines the humming of a restless seaport with the pleasure of a hill-town.

Chittagong is connected with Dhaka by rail, road, air and water. It is also connected with Cox's Bazar, Jessore, and Calcutta across the border by air.

Cox's Bazar

Ninety five miles from Chittagong by road and twenty minutes by air is Cox's Bazar — a beach-comber's paradise having one of the world's longest (75 miles) stretches of beach, sloping gently into the blue waters of Bay of Bengal. A chain of green hills covered by deep forests, serve as a picturesque background to the beach. The range of hills runs parallel to the beach for about 60 miles. At low tide, a jeep can be driven on the sand for quite a distance. The wide beach is endowed with silvery-golden sand. The sea is good for bathing and swimming as it is free from sharks.

Accommodation, rent-a-car, food and bar facilities are available at reasonable rates in

modern rest-houses, motels and restaurants especially built for the tourists by the Bangladesh Parjatan (Tourism) Corporation. Local sight-seeing tours and excursion trips are also arranged by the Corporation in its minibuses.

Rangamati

This picturesque town of the Chittagong Hill Tracts district, known for its rare scenic beauty and unspoiled natural life, is just 48 miles from Chittagong by road. It is perched on the bank of the huge-man-made Kaptai Lake, making it accessible by water as well. Rangamati has become a favourite holiday resort because of its location and natural charm.

Mainamati

Five miles off Comilla town is a range of low hills called the Mainamati-Lalmai ridge, an extensive centre of Buddhist culture, during the Chandra and Deva dynasties.

On the slopes of these hills lie scattered a treasure of information about the early Buddhist civilisation (7th to 12th century A.D.). A museum at Mainamati preserves the archaeological finds.

Paharpur

At Paharpur in Rajshahi district lies the relics of a glorious past of the wonder that was Bangladesh under the Buddhist Pala dynasty (8th century A.D.).

Excavations at this historic site has exposed to view the Somepur Vihare, which is the biggest Buddhist monastery south of the Himalayas. The

monastery is so gigantic in size it looks like a 'Pahar, the Bangla word for hill.

The monastery is distinguished by its unique uniform style of architecture, which were emulated as afield as Java and Sumatra.

Paharpur can be reached by rail and road from Dhaka.

Mahasthangarh

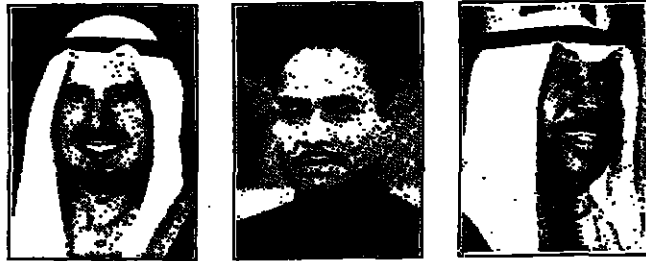
Only eight miles from the district town of Bogra in the north, which is connected with Dhaka by road, and rail, the ruins of Mahasthangarh have always been an object of interest to tourists and scholars, archaeologists and historians. It is the earliest known capital of Bengal, dating from the 3rd century B.C.

Sunderbans

Spread over an area of 2,316 square miles of deltaic swamp along the coastal belt of Khulna district, the Sunderbans are the home of the Royal Bengal Tiger. The Sunderbans are a must for game lovers and anglers. Tigers, spotted deer, monkeys, pythons, crocodiles, fishes and tropical birds abound here. These forests are accessible by river from Chalna and Khulna and there are rest houses for the visitors to stay and enjoy unspoiled nature with all its charm and majesty. Spending some days and nights deep inside the forests can be rare treat for a lover of nature. The mid-forest tourists lodge at a place called "Nilkamol." "Blue lotus" now under construction, is an ideal wilderness dream-spot.



For the adventurous, Bangladesh offers a spectacular time.



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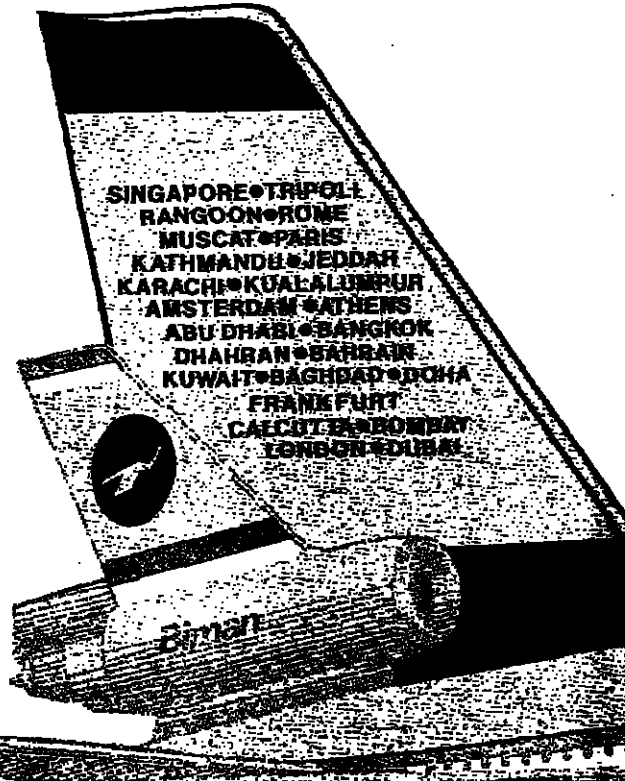
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Emphasis on raising output

Tackling problems of rural poverty

By Sultan Ahmad

BANGLADESH, though small in size of about 55,000 sq miles, has a large population of about 104 million and growth rate of 2.5 per cent per annum. It is predominantly agricultural and rural as 90 per cent of its population live in the rural area and are dependent on agriculture which contributes 54 per cent of country's GDP and provides employment to 80 per cent of its labour force and bring two third of its foreign earnings.

Farming is concentrated on food crops particularly rice which accounts for 80 per cent of arable land and is the country's staple diet.

The land is extensively cultivated under the age-long traditional methods, the size of the farm is small and uneconomical and the average yield of crops is very low.

The country is deficient in food supply, the shortage is met through import from abroad, which drains the country's foreign exchange reserve. A large percentage of the rural population are landless labourers with limited employment opportunities.

Modern medical services and supply of medicine are scarce and costly. Villagers depend mostly on indigenous medicine.

The literacy rate is very low and is about 26 per cent, but a very large percentage of rural men and almost all rural women are illiterate. In short, the condition in the rural areas militate against modernisation.

The term development, whether it is applied to ideas, people, events, countries, or whatever, in general, refers to a change from the status quo to some desired, more advanced, more complete or more fulfilling condition.

It has both a quantitative and qualitative dimension. National development since World War II has primarily been defined in terms of quantitative economic development increased gross national product, increased employment, etc. Some attention was given to the social welfare or quality of life aspects of development, but they were almost always thought to be by-products of quantitative growth and not considered as primary objectives or indicators themselves.

However the past strategy which tended to emphasise economic growth without specifically considering the manner in which the benefits are to be distributed has been found to be wrong.

The assumption that increased growth per se would lead to a reduction in poverty as the benefits of an expanding economy spread among the people has also been proved to be incorrect because the emphasis on increasing the rate of growth with a corresponding concentration of effort on the "high growth" modern sector of the economy led to virtual



Concern for rural development is the prime objective in Bangladesh, where a majority of the population lives in villages.

exclusion of the traditional sector and negligence of the growth potential of the rural areas.

Failure to recognise this has been a major reason why rural growth has been slow and rural poverty has been increasing. So the objectives of development must include sustained increase in per capita output and incomes, expansion of productive employment and greater equity in the distribution of the benefits of growth.

This implies reducing poverty and human misery by increasing the productivity of the poor and providing them greater access to goods and services.

The strategy for rural development aimed at raising growth rates and distributing the fruits of growth more fairly implies greater interaction between the modern and traditional sectors, specially in the form of increased trade in farm products and in technical knowledge and information.

Along with the direct ways of tackling the problems of rural poverty — because such problems have been relatively neglected in the past — other methods are also required to be adopted to deal with rural poverty in all its forms.

Rural development must lead to a sustained increase in the productivity and incomes of rural workers and households.

The emphasis is on raising output and income rather than simply redistributing current income and existing assets.

Operationally, this concept of rural development requires that target groups be specified among the rural poor for whom specific measures to raise production and income can be designed and in whose case the resulting flow of benefits —

both direct and indirect is both identifiable and potentially measurable.

It is necessary to focus on these groups of rural population in terms of whose well-being policy action and programmes can be designed and evaluated. The important target groups identified by low income include small holders, tenants, and the landless, each separate group may need a special programme of its own to handle the specific problems it faces.

Of course the operational goals of rural development extend beyond and particular sector. They include improved productivity and thus higher incomes for the target groups as well as minimum acceptable levels of food, cloth, shelter, education and health services.

Fulfilment of these objectives calls for an expansion of goods and services available to the rural poor and creation/adaptation/expansion of institutions and policies that will enable them to benefit fully from the whole range of economic and social services.

In order that the development be self-sustaining, it is of special importance that the members of the group participate in the organisation of the programme.

A broad based multi-sectoral approach is therefore necessary whereby series of activities are to be undertaken almost simultaneously and the constituent elements should be complementary and reinforcing.

Before explaining how this can be done, we may first discuss the rural development undertaken by the government in the past in greater details and their results including the causes of their failures which will obviously help finding out suitable measures to tackle rural problems and make rural development.

We have noticed earlier the great need for rural development in order to save the country from stagnation, nay from the deteriorating conditions.

Actually concern for rural development in the areas which now constitute Bangladesh has been in the past. Its history traces back in British India with the launching of co-operative movement under the Act of 1904 which was subsequently substituted by the co-operative societies Act of 1912 and lastly by that of 1940.

Under this movement, village co-operatives were organised throughout the country for channelling agricultural credits to the farmers.

This system of co-operatives was subsequently extended to other rural sectors besides agriculture and until the early sixties the co-operative movement could make some progress in selected areas but ultimately it failed to bring any breakthrough in rural development as a vehicle for reasons:

a). Absence of member-educating programme for which genuine leadership in and loyalty to the co-operatives did not generate.

b). Too much emphasis on credit without a thrift deposit, or education or supervision of the same.

c). Little emphasis on direct production-oriented activities such as marketing, supply and storage facilities to make co-operatives self-sustained, self-financed and self-managed organisation. Actually, this movement was but rulers technique to bring about a harmony between the landlords (brought under permanent settlement of land) and the peasantry because the settlement of land for cultivation had given birth to an exploiting class of landlords and merchant moneylenders who oppressed the tenants pauperising the peasantry in general though, as a by-product, it gave some relief to the poor masses of the country.

Anecdotes and remedies were prescribed by thinkers and social leaders eg. establishment of Debt Settlement Board (Reen Shalishi Board) by late A. K. Fazlul Haque extended relief to the rural peasantry. But such measures gave sporadic relief to individuals only i.e. when the Debt Settlement Board intervened on the approach of the affected peasants and hence was very limited in scope and extent and obviously not a direct method or programme for rural development.

The V-Aid

The first major thrust in the field of rural development under the government auspices was the Village Agricultural and Industrial Development Programme (V-Aid) in 1953. The objective of the V-Aid was to foster effective citizen's participation in rural development project in all fields of rural life. The programme covered 28 per cent of the total area till 1960 and was generally accepted by the people. But in spite of people's initial enthusiasm, the V-Aid could not make much impact on Bangladesh economy as there were only isolated and ill-co-ordinated attempts and also due to absence of institutional support. More so, desired level of people's participation could not be achieved as main emphasis was given to paid change agents and not people, for running the programme.

We extend our best wishes to all Bangladeshi nationals, expatriates and our Kuwaiti friends on the occasion of our

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Rich mosaic of culture

THE cultural scene in Bangladesh presents a very rich mosaic of refinements. Bengali is the universal language of the people of Bangladesh which in the early decades of the 20th century swept into the mainstream of world culture through mainly the works of such geniuses as Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore and the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam while poet Jasimuddin's austere lyrical anecdotes depicting rural life kept alive the link with the toiling masses. With this heritage to draw inspiration from, contemporary Bengali literature has been pulsating with the creative impulses and contributions of innumerable top class writers, poets, novelists, playwrights, essayists. Many of their works have earned fame much beyond the frontiers of Bangladesh.

The rich tradition of music of Bangladesh can be divided into three distinct categories — classical, folk and modern. The tradition of classical music, both vocal and instrumental, is rooted in the ancient and medieval history of the subcontinent. It has been cultivated with great devotion and patience by musicians through many centuries. Folk music was nourished through the ages mainly by village bards. It is the most popular timeless form of music in Bangladesh. Rich in devotional mysticism and love, folk music expresses the authentic flavour and charm of the soil of Bangladesh.

The most well-known forms are bhatiali, baul, marfati, murshidi, bhaosya etc. In modern Bengali music, the two distinct strains are formed by the songs of Rabindranath Tagore and the synthesis of classical, folk and middle eastern musical strains introduced by Kazi Nazrul Islam. Modern Bengali songs are a captivating maze of masterly innovations.

The art of dance in Bangladesh has grown from the classical forms of the subcontinent and enriched by folk, tribal, ballet and Middle Eastern strains. After the establishment of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bangladesh, the dancing art received a great impetus.

Painting
Bangladesh has a rich tradition of painting and terracotta art. Episodes from mythologies, legends, love stories and, above all, nature's beauty found artistic expression in terracotta, pottery, clay dolls, handicraft and embroidery.

Most of Bangladesh's modern painters are steeped in this tradition. Modern Bangladesh painting was pioneered by such painters as Zainul Abedin, Quamrul Hasan, Anwarul Haq, Shafuddin Ahmed and Shafiqul Amin to mention only a few. All of them sought and found their finest expressions in figurative works that drew spiritual nourishment from the soil and the toiling masses.

The next generation of painters also upheld this tradition but their repertoire ranged from figurative to non-figurative through a refresh-



Young girls participate in a celebration in Dhaka.

ting and enriched by folk, tribal, ballet and Middle Eastern strains. After the establishment of the Academy of Performing Arts in Bangladesh, the dancing art received a great impetus.

Theatre
Theatre in Bangladesh has a tradition that is more than a century old. In the early days, open-air theatrical performances known as Jatra (rural operetta) used to be held on festive occasions. Popular love stories, historical or legendary acts of valour by heroes against invading forces and mythological anecdotes alongside the legends of Arabian or Persian Nights provided the basic themes of popular jatra plays. Despite attacks by the cinema and the television on its traditional territory, jatra has successfully held its own and is still the most popular form of mass entertainment in the country.

Alongside jatra, modern theatre form has been thriving

in urban Bangladesh. If not so much in form, in the thematic content at least, Bangladesh playwrights succeeded in establishing a distinct character for local plays.

Bangladesh's rich cultural heritage is also very well reflected in architecture. The pre-muslim architectural remains are today places of interest for scholars, researchers, students and visitors. The Islamic building art during the period from 1202 — 1757 had strong elements of luxurious surface decoration and intricate stone-carving. A dominant central dome and tall central entrance were also particular features of architecture during this period.

Contemporary architecture in Bangladesh shows the imprint of several new impressions. The Baitul Mukarram mosque built in the form of an enlarged cube of the Holy Kaaba is a bold concept put in shape in masonry. The American architect Louis Kahn's ideas are well-reflected in the buildings in a section of Dhaka where the gigantic National Assembly building stands.

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On the international sectors only all-economy B707 aircrafts are being operated presently, hence there is no first class.

Cyprus Airways (Iata) is an on-line carrier and operates once-weekly flights to and from Kuwait.

Apart from certain sectors where business-class is operated, all the other flights have all-economy seatings.

Yugoslav Airlines (Iata) is an on-line carrier, and it operates once weekly to Belgrade.

China Airlines is Nationalist China's (Taiwan) airline and Kuwait is an off-line station. It is worth noting that the airline

operates wide-body aircrafts to all its destinations in Far-East and West-Coast of United States of America.

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BUSINESS & FINANCE

US personal income, spending and savings rise

WASHINGTON, March 25. (Reuters): Americans' personal income rose 0.9 per cent last month, leading to similarly substantial increases in consumer spending and savings, the Commerce Department said yesterday.

US personal income rose \$33.9 billion in February to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 3.91 trillion after rises of 0.3 per cent in January and 0.8 per cent in December.

The department said farm subsidy payments, cost of living adjustments in several government programmes and changes in social security payments contributed to the increase.

Without those factors, personal income would have risen 0.7 per cent in February and 0.5 per cent in January, it said.

Expenditures
Personal consumption expenditures, or consumer spending, rose 0.7 per cent in January and 0.8 per cent in December.

Consumer spending fell \$16.1 billion in the fourth quarter of last year, sparking speculation the October stock market crash frightened consumers out of their spending habits and the economy would suffer as a result.

Economists said the February increase dispelled these fears, showing consumers were still spending.

Americans also saved more in February than in January, largely because of tax savings from the tax reform act of 1986.

The personal savings rate, which is savings as a percentage of disposable income, rose to 5.2 per cent in February from 4.8 per cent in January.

The February savings rate was the highest since October when it was 5.4 per cent. Last year, it was 3.8 per cent, its lowest since 1947 when it was 3.1 per cent.

Disposable personal income — personal income less personal tax and non-tax payments — rose \$37.2 billion in February after a \$19.2 billion January increase.

ADB chief urges India to liberalise economy

NEW DELHI, March 25. (AP): Masao Fujioka, president of the Asian Development Bank, said today that India should liberalise economic restrictions to encourage foreign investments in industry.

Fujioka, who visited New Delhi to attend the conference of the Society for International Development, told a news conference that "India needs more manufacturing industries to raise income levels."

"Licensing restrictions should be liberalised because that is a disincentive for entrepreneurs," he said. "India should be more open to get a larger share of surplus funds in investments."

Requests
Fujioka said India's agriculture also should be diversified and strengthened.

The Asian Development Bank is processing requests for financing five major government-sponsored projects in India totalling about \$600 million. The projects deal with telecommunications, thermal power and expansion of highways.

IBS to hold TOEBL test

THE Institute of Banking Studies (IBS) will hold on Monday the "Test of English as a Banking Language" (TOEBL) for employees, according to the IBS press release.

The test, prepared and supervised by the English Language Unit at the IBS, measures the candidates' basic linguistic skills of listening, understanding, speaking and writing a banking related material.

Besides being one of the outstanding services rendered by the IBS through its various programmes which meet the growing needs of banking sector and enrich the knowledge and experience of its employees, those who pass TOEBL test will be awarded a certificate indicating their outstanding capabilities in English. It will also expedite their career progress and make them eligible to join the "Executive Diploma in Banking," which will be introduced by the IBS.

The press release said that the TOEBL candidates should have passed phase VI of "Banking Communication in English" programme (BCE) offered by the IBS.

Cairo to seek fresh Paris Club accord to reschedule payments

Egypt committed to IMF agreement

CAIRO, March 25. (Reuters): A key cabinet minister yesterday rejected suggestions Egypt's agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) was foundering and said the government was committed to making it work.

Atef Ebeid, Minister of Cabinet Affairs and a top economic aide to President Hosni Mubarak, said the two sides disagreed on two reforms — whether to raise domestic interest rates and how fast to unify all exchange rates to a market level.

But the dialogue would continue and Egypt intended to agree with the IMF on action to follow up their standby credits accord signed last May.

"The dialogue is on, it will continue. We intend to continue and we intend to agree with the IMF," Ebeid told Reuters in an interview which provided rare

insight into how the most populous Arab state sees relations with the fund.

Ebeid said slow-moving talks with Western creditor governments to reschedule payments up to next June 30 on Egypt's \$43-billion foreign debt would eventually be completed.

He said Egypt would seek a fresh Paris Club accord to reschedule payments from July 1 "unless we get a considerable increase in our resources like the oil price going up to 1985 levels." Egypt is a leading non-Opec producer.

Vital
Ebeid said a review by IMF experts of Egypt's performance, which started this month, would continue next week. Central Bank Governor Salah Hamid would go to Washington on April 14 "probably for a third round if needed."

IMF approval is vital for



Hosni Mubarak

Egypt's expected bid for fresh Paris Club rescheduling and disbursement of withdrawn credits of over \$150 million under last May's accord.

Ebeid said the IMF and Egypt agreed more effort was needed to reduce the budget deficit and the government had to do this by

increasing revenue rather than cutting spending.

He said the issue of state subsidies, which keep basic goods and services much cheaper than world levels, was not raised.

But Egyptians could expect a review of the taxation system — not necessarily a tax increase but better collection.

"Only 50 per cent of what should be collected is collected," Ebeid said.

Rates

He said there was no dispute with the IMF on unifying Egypt's exchange rates, but they disagreed on how fast Cairo should abolish its artificially low Central Bank rate of 70 pounds to the dollar at which subsidised foods are imported.

Switching such purchases to the market rate of about 2.25 pounds to the dollar could harm the poor, he said.

"If you transfer more than the

people can take, you're running a risk of political instability... and economic instability which will affect the flow of investment," he said.

"We are making calculations how long it will take to do that safely. They (the IMF) will definitely be interested in seeing that done over a short period. We will definitely be interested in seeing it done over a long period."

Disagreement
The only other issue of disagreement was a fund demand that Egypt should raise domestic interest rates — which the government felt would do nothing to attract more hard currency remittances from abroad.

Asked if the government planned to increase energy prices, a condition for World Bank approval of up to \$800 million in project financing, Ebeid said: "The whole sector is still under study. No commitment."

Opec committee to discuss strategy

Oil producers could boost prices without output cut

TOKYO, March 25. (Reuters): The stage is set for Opec to cut oil production and engineer a recovery in world crude oil prices, oil industry sources said today.

Prices have fallen \$4 below the \$18 a barrel target set by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec), but an Opec output cut supported by non-Opec oil producers could bring crude oil prices back to \$18 by mid-year, they said.

Doubts remain whether producers can exercise the self-restraint necessary, however.

Indonesia said that Opec's price committee would meet in Vienna on April 6-7 to discuss strategy to face sagging oil prices.

Newly-appointed Indonesian Energy Minister Ginandjar

Karasmita told reporters the main challenge to the 13-member Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries was to respond to new output coming on stream from non-Opec producers.

He said he would be taking widely-respected outgoing Energy Minister Subroto with him to the Vienna meeting. The committee, comprising Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Nigeria, Indonesia and Algeria, can call an emergency Opec conference.

Formula
In Vienna, a spokesman for the Opec secretariat said the dates for the meeting, scheduled for the first week of April by Opec president Rihwanu Lukman of Nigeria, had not yet been agreed by all five oil ministers.

Ginandjar, 46, a Tokyo-educated martial arts enthusiast who took over from Subroto this week, told reporters after a ceremony at the Presidential Palace that he saw no need for a new Opec pricing or output formula.

But strategy would be reviewed in the light of audited figures on production by Opec members which would be discussed by the committee.

"The key factor for Opec is to remain united," he said. "All Opec members are now sticking to their production quotas. The constraint we are facing is the emergence of new non-Opec suppliers."

He said new producers like North Yemen and Angola had increased world supplies by up to

500,000 barrels of oil a day. Oil analysts in London said this was about the amount Opec would have to cut output by to balance supply and demand and help prices recover to its \$18 a barrel reference price.

Oil prices on world markets have fallen by between \$3 and \$4 below official Opec prices, pushed down by high stock levels around the world, a warmer winter in Europe and North America, and reports of price discounting by some members of the organisation.

Pressure
Ginandjar said Indonesia was strongly resisting pressure to offer discounts in its main market, Japan.

Malaysia's state-owned oil company Petronas said today it

would support Opec moves to boost world prices.

Malaysia is part of a group of seven non-Opec producers who met in London earlier this month, amid talk of Opec forging closer cooperation with producers who are not part of the organisation to support prices.

News that Subroto, who was Indonesian Energy Minister for 10 years and widely regarded as a moderate within Opec, would attend the Vienna meeting was likely to be regarded as a positive sign by the oil industry.

Many industry executives had said his departure could be a blow to the organisation as he often acted as mediator between differing factions, particularly after the start of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980.

Indonesia negotiating new oil deal with Japan

JAKARTA, March 25. (Reuters): Indonesia's state oil company Pertamina is negotiating a new long-term contract for the sale of crude to Japan and is rejecting pressure to give discounts, government and Pertamina officials said today.

New Energy Minister Ginandjar Kartasmita told reporters Pertamina was discussing contracts for sales in April and May while preparing a new long-term contract.

Indonesia's one-year contract with Japanese buyers expires at the end of this month, officials said.

Pertamina spokesman Kusumadinda told reporters that negotiations were taking place in Tokyo and Jakarta on the new contract, which he expected to be ready by the beginning of April.

Crucial
He said the Japanese buyers had requested price discounts in a letter to Pertamina, but the state oil company had rejected the demand. The price for its main Minas crude under Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec) rules is \$17.56.

Half Indonesia's oil exports go to Japan, and Endin said the negotiations were crucial for the Indonesian economy. It exports around 140 million barrels of

crude and condensate to Japan a year, according to official figures.

Ginandjar, who took over from outgoing Energy Minister Subroto this week, said reports that Indonesia had already offered discounts to Japan were incorrect.

"The reports are not true. Up to March 1988, all sales were carried out at the GSP (government selling price). No discount. Sales for April and May are still being negotiated," he stated.

Asked if Indonesia might offer discounts, he said:

Stability
"We don't know the term 'discount.' Indonesia will not sign a contract below the GSP level," he stated. "The term 'discount' is actually rather ambiguous, because we do give lower prices to the Far East for the administration fee and so on."

"Around 30 cents (per barrel), if I'm not mistaken," he added. He said that although Indonesia's share of the Japanese crude market was only around 13 per cent, supplies from Indonesia were safe and stable.

"Indonesia's oil is the oil which brings stability to Japan. So, no matter what the conditions are, Japan will take Indonesia's oil."

Turkish-Soviet economic talks postponed

ISTANBUL, March 25. (Reuters): A meeting of a Turkish-Soviet joint economic committee which was to have started today has been postponed, Anatolian News Agency reported yesterday.

It said the talks, already postponed twice, were again delayed due to the illness of Soviet Minister of Foreign Economic Relations Konstantin Katushev who was to lead his country's delegation.

The Turkish Foreign Ministry said the economic committee would meet in mid-April but it did not set an exact date.

Agreement

Discussions of a joint technical committee in Ankara ended on Wednesday with agreement on a draft protocol on Soviet natural gas and oil sales and contracts for Turkish firms, the ministry said.

The protocol covers Soviet natural gas and oil sales and contracts for Turkish firms. The committee, which has been meeting since March 17, also discussed ways of developing trade and possible joint ventures.

World Business Summary

Japan eyes Norway for fresh oil and gas

OSLO, March 25. (Reuters): Japan, which has to import almost all its petroleum, is building stakes in North Sea oil and gas. Norwegian oil industry and government sources said yesterday that two Japanese oil companies were to buy an interest in a North Sea oil and gas field, amid signs that Tokyo is increasingly interested in Norway's huge offshore developments. Norske Conoco A/S, the Norwegian subsidiary of the US oil giant Conoco, said it had agreed to sell part of its stake in the small Gysda field to the Japanese-owned Mitsui and Arabian Oil Co Ltd. The field will start producing in 1990. "We are doing this to rearrange our assets and still have a strong commitment to Norwegian offshore activities," Conoco spokesman Oeyvind Kvaal told Reuters. Kvaal declined to name the price of the sale, but it will be the first direct Japanese involvement in Norway's oil industry. Japan currently imports much of its oil from the Gulf, where the tanker war between Iran and Iraq is still raging.

Government sources told Reuters that Tokyo's ambassador to Norway, Shinichiro Asano, had recently told Oil and Energy Minister Arne Oeien that Japan could be interested in buying Norwegian gas.

Last month, a Japanese company — Idemitsu — became the first to apply for a share in production licences off Norway.

EEC presses US in petroleum levy dispute

GENEVA, March 25. (AP): The European Economic Community yesterday threatened trade retaliation against the United States unless it brings a tax on petroleum imports into line with an international agreement. An EEC delegate, Christophe Bail, told a council meeting of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade that the 12-nation economic bloc may ask the council to allow trade restrictions that would offset the US levy. He left open which US products might be targeted. US delegate Michael Samuels dismissed the EEC threat as premature, a meeting source said. He said the EEC has provided no evidence the current tax has harmed its trade.

President Ronald Reagan's administration, in its 1989 budget proposal to Congress, has sought a remedy with a uniform crude oil tax of 9.65 cents a barrel, Samuels told delegates.

The 96-nation GATT told the United States to change the tax last June, saying it violated international trade rules by discriminating against imports. The ruling followed complaints by Mexico, Canada and the EEC. Under the 1986 levy, US domestic crude oil is taxed at 8.2 cents a barrel while imports are taxed at 11.7 cents. The proceeds finance the superfund hazardous waste cleanup programme.

The GATT source, who requested anonymity, said "it's unusual, because we do not normally get to the point where countries seek permission to retaliate."

GATT rules provide for retaliation if a member fails to act on a ruling. That possibility has been used only once, though, when the Netherlands was allowed to restrict imports of US wheat in 1952 to offset American dairy trade barriers.

Delegates agreed to reconsider the superfund issue at the next council meeting on May 5. In other business, Canada formally told delegates it agreed to the findings of GATT probes, calling on it to change its liquor marketing and fish processing policies. However, Trade Minister Pat Carney said on Monday in Ottawa that while Canada will open its borders to more foreign wine and liquor, protection will continue for the country's large beer industry.

White House warns against foreign investor registry

WASHINGTON, March 25. (Reuters): A senior Reagan administration official warned yesterday that forcing foreign investors to publicly disclose their US holdings could damage the US economy by driving up interest rates. Treasury Secretary James Baker urged Congress to "consider long and hard the risk of higher interest rates they are inviting" with plans for public registry of foreign investors. But at a hearing of the Senate Commerce Committee, Democrat Lloyd Bentsen of Texas indicated interest in the idea despite Baker's concern. Bentsen, co-chairman of the Senate-House Conference Committee negotiating a trade bill, said he "hoped to find some accommodation" for the registry proposal provided it was shown it would not hurt foreign investment in the United States. The House of Representatives approved a proposal by Congressman John Bryant, a Texas Democrat, in a trade bill it passed last year, but the Senate rejected a similar amendment to its bill. House and Senate negotiators now are reconciling the two versions of the trade bill.

Baker, in a statement sent to the committee, said a public registry requirement would discourage foreign investment just when "we have a special need for it." "If enacted, the Bryant provision would have a chilling effect on foreign investment in the United States — thereby costing jobs, raising interest rates, lowering productivity, closing off opportunities for managerial improvements, and undermining our efforts to liberalise investments abroad," Baker said.

Less foreign investment would create more demand for money to service the government's massive debt, thereby driving up interest rates. The proposal under consideration by both chambers would require investors buying more than five per cent of a US firm with assets of \$5 million or more to list their identity and holdings. The information would be publicly available.

Only Opec can meet future shortfall: Chalabi

BRISBANE, Australia, March 25. (Opecna): Opec is the only group of oil suppliers capable of meeting any future increasing shortfall between world demand for Opec and non-Opec supplies, Dr Fadil Al Chalabi, Opec deputy secretary general in a video-recorded address to the Australian Petroleum Exploration Association annual conference. He said without Opec's policies of self-restraint in terms of production and prices, the market could never be stabilised. He reported that Al Chalabi urged non-Opec producers to try to cut oil output to help achieve the goal of price stability. He pointed out that Opec member countries continued to limit production in "an ever-increasing sacrifice" to try to maintain a stable market.

In assuming responsibility for supporting prices, Opec had seen its output decline and had watched others take advantage of the world price to produce at maximum capacity, the deputy secretary general noted. "Cooperation is the only way to realise a lasting and solid stability in an industry which is much too important and strategic to be left to the vagaries of the market," he said.

Saudi Arabia yesterday reaffirmed its commitment to all Opec resolutions and urged all other members to remain dedicated. In a statement carried by the Saudi Press Agency, the kingdom denied reports that it intended to break from official prices agreed to by Opec member countries. Petroleum and Mineral Resources Minister Hisham M. Nazer said reports of Saudi deviation from Opec prices were "interpretations that run counter to reality." "The basic factor in balancing supply and demand is the commitment of all member countries to Opec-decreed quotas and prices," the statement said.

UK contractors' hopes rise

Thatcher to visit Turkey next month

ISTANBUL, March 25. (Reuters): British contractors' hopes for business are high ahead of a visit to Turkey by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher next month, diplomats say.

Her April 6-8 visit will be the first by a British prime minister since Winston Churchill was in Turkey during World War Two. The best-known project for which British companies are vying is a third suspension bridge over the Bosphorus, but UK firms are also bidding for contracts ranging from sewage treatment to electronics for F-16 warplanes.

"Interest is at its highest level for decades," said one British official, noting a 160 per cent rise in Anglo-Turkish trade from 1983 to 1987 to over a billion dollars a year.

Support
Thatcher will try to parlay Britain's political support this decade for Nato-member Turkey into a bigger share of Turkey's trade than the current six per cent, diplomats say.

Turkish officials for their part will closely watch what Thatcher has to say about Turkey's April 1987 application for full mem-



Margaret Thatcher

bership of the European Economic Community.

"It's a delicate subject... Thatcher's statement should be helpful," a senior British diplomat said, noting relative political stability since the 1980-83 military takeover.

"This and President Kenan Evren's visit (to London) in June are a reflection of Turkey's democratic image, an endorsement of the great progress that has been made," the diplomat said.

Most of the contracts are at delicate stages due to fierce competition and Turkey's need to clamp down on public projects and cut its big budget deficit.

Istanbul Mayor Bedrettin Dalan plans to keep contractors guessing about who will win the Bosphorus bridge contract until after he was met Thatcher.

"We will award the contract in the second half of April," Dalan told Reuters. "Building should start this year."

Britain has backed the bid of a subsidiary of Trafalgar House with a \$64-million grant, but Turkey's Sezi Turkes-Fevzi Akkaya's bid of \$171.5 million was \$15 million cheaper.

Profitable

British diplomats however say it is not clear if and when the Bosphorus bridge will be built or indeed how profitable the project would be for Britain as a whole.

The first British government concessionary loan to Turkey was made last year, towards a \$130-million gas project in Ankara won by a consortium led by Britain's Amec International.

Thatcher will inaugurate the project during her visit.

Britain's Tarmac and Wimpey are major partners in a consortium that hopes to build a \$200-million highway to ease chronic Istanbul traffic by cutting tunnels and building a fourth bridge over the Golden Horn.

Balfour Beatty and other British firms are ready to work on railways, gas storage tanks, Istanbul's Ataturk airport and water and sewage works around the country, diplomats say.

Contractors

British contractors including Marconi, Plessey, British Aerospace and Westland are bidding to update Turkish radar ground-to-air defences, F-16 electronic counter measures equipment, radio communications and helicopters.

The main obstacle to future British contracts will be Turkey's economic problems brought on by government over-spending.

"As a monetarist, Thatcher can only approve of a clamp down on public spending," said one diplomat. "One of her speeches will be a lecture on her political philosophy."

LONDON
(Alpha Stocks)

NAME	LAST	OPEN
ABBAY LFE	248.0	248.0
ADT LTD	109.4	109.4
ALD LYONS	67.63	67.63
AMSTRAD	158.0	158.0
ARGYLL GP	200.0	200.0
ASDA GP	175.0	175.0
BAA PP	113.0	113.0
BTR	245.0	245.0
BAT INDS	437.0	437.0
BARCLAYS	473.0	473.0
BASS	177.0	177.0
BEAZER	177.0	177.0
BEECHAMS	452.0	452.0
BET ORD	240.0	240.0
BICC PLC	303.0	303.0
BLUE ARMY	113.0	113.0
BLOC CIRC	445.0	445.0
BOC GP	375.0	375.0
BOOTS CO	217.0	217.0
BPB INDS	278.0	278.0
BR COMM	290.0	290.0
BR AIRWAY	168.0	168.0
BR GAS PP	333.0	333.0
B.P.	263.0	263.0
B.P. NEW	74.0	74.0
BR TELCOM	248.0	248.0
BRITTOIL	505.0	505.0
BUNZL	158.0	158.0
BURMAN OL	494.0	494.0
BURTON	239.0	239.0
CABLESWIR	324.0	324.0
CADBURYS	228.0	228.0
COATS VTY	260.0	260.0
COMI UNI	325.0	325.0
COMS GOLD	900.0	900.0
COOKSONS	555.0	555.0
COURTAULD	323.0	323.0
DALGETY	285.0	285.0
DEE CP	174.0	174.0
DIXONS	171.0	171.0
ENG CHINA	398.0	398.0
ENTER OIL	335.0	335.0
FERRANTI	81.0	81.0
FISONS	243.0	243.0
GEN ACCID	875.0	875.0
GEN ELEC	145.0	145.0
GLAXO	902.0	902.0
GRANADA	327.0	327.0
GLOBE	178.0	178.0
GRAND MET	438.0	438.0
GUS A	070.0	070.0
GUARD RYL	180.0	180.0
GKN	305.0	305.0
GUINNESS	304.0	304.0
HAMMERS	563.0	563.0
HANSON	128.0	128.0
HAKER SID	475.0	475.0
HILLSDOWN	278.0	278.0
ICI	020.0	020.0
IMI	188.0	188.0

LONDON
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DALGETY	285.0	285.0
DEE CP	174.0	174.0
DIXONS	171.0	171.0
ENG CHINA	398.0	398.0
ENTER OIL	335.0	335.0
FERRANTI	81.0	81.0
FISONS	243.0	243.0
GEN ACCID	875.0	875.0
GEN ELEC	145.0	145.0
GLAXO	902.0	902.0
GRANADA	327.0	327.0
GLOBE	178.0	178.0
GRAND MET	438.0	438.0
GUS A	070.0	070.0
GUARD RYL	180.0	180.0
GKN	305.0	305.0
GUINNESS	304.0	304.0
HAMMERS	563.0	563.0
HANSON	128.0	128.0
HAKER SID	475.0	475.0
HILLSDOWN	278.0	278.0
ICI	020.0	020.0
IMI	188.0	188.0

LONDON
(Zeta Stocks)

0	366/0	READICUT
0	120/0	RED FARM
0	130/0	REDFORD
0	308/0	REGAL GP
0	178/0	REINISHA
0	101/0	REINOLD
0	222/0	REINOKKI
4	119/0	RHP ROKKI
0	120/0	ROCKMANS
0	105/0	ROCKMANS
0	171/0	RO-ROFF
0	331/0	ROTHSCH
0	372.0	ROWNEY
4	45/0	RUBERGI
0	9/0	SAGA NORI
0	210/0	SAVILLE
0	326/0	SAVOY (A)
0	282/0	SCOT HER
0	73/0	SCOT I.E.
0	119/0	SCOT MORT
0	31/0	SCOT NAT
0	48/0	SCOT NAT
0	191/0	SCOT TV
0	340/0	SD2 ALLC
0	216/0	SECS TEST
0	308/0	U-SELECT
0	413/0	SEIRE
2	274/0	SIMON ER
0	307/0	SIMON ER
0	141/0	600 GORD
2	214/0	SLOUGH R
0	345/0	SMITH D
0	40/0	SMITH W
0	163/0	SNARFIT
0	30/0	S-NV SH
2	264/0	SUNSHINE
0	172/0	SGONG HL
2	229/0	SPRING R
0	210/0	SPRIG-SAR
0	256/0	STAKIS
0	228/0	U-STNORP
0	573/0	STANLEY
0	395/0	STORMGUA
1	128/0	STYLIN
0	283/0	TYLR MDR
0	288/0	TELENETR
0	101/0	TELENETR
0	382/0	TV SM HL
0	153/0	TEKNO
0	121/0	TIE RALPH
0	76/0	TINE PROF
0	43/0	TOWING

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Citibank India introduces new services

Bank offers Citilife Certificate to NRIs

CITIBANK India investments — Citibank India's special programme of accounts and services for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) has just completed its second year in the Gulf. The programme was launched in January 1986 in UAE and subsequently was offered to NRIs all over the Gulf. Launched many years after other banks NRI programmes, Citibank India Investments has attained a position of prominence in the NRI business. It has set up NRI offices in over a dozen countries from the Far East to London, USA and Canada in the west, in addition to the Gulf.

Unique
Citibank market leadership is no longer in doubt. Recently the bank made a presentation to the senior officers of Reserve Bank of India and to members of Fedai (Foreign Exchange Dealers Association of India) i.e. all the banks in India detailing various aspects of its NRI programme and analysing reasons for its success.

Mr Harit Talwar, Regional

Sales Manager and Mr Jolly Zachariah, International NRI Personal Account Officer, are now in Kuwait introducing yet another new service to NRIs. The bank has a unique two-in-one offer for NRIs called Citilife Certificate. This provides among the highest interest rates on US\$ bank deposits and simultaneously offers insurance coverage at rock bottom group premium rates. Previously the Citilife Certificate provided only life insurance coverage, but has now been enhanced to cover disability insurance also.

Success
Mr Zachariah explained that this has been done because there was a constant customer demand to provide more than life insurance coverage. Additionally the insurance coverage is now available for upto 200 per cent of the maturity value of the deposit.

Thus if a customer places US\$ 10,000 for a three year deposit he can avail insurance for upto US\$ 26,400 for a one time premium of around US\$350. This way in case

of an eventuality the customer could get upto US\$40,000 against his three year US\$10,000 Citilife Certificate. Mr Zachariah commented that this is a very beneficial product and one in every three dollars of his business in Kuwait comes from Citilife Certificate.

Asked about the reasons for the resounding success of Citibank India Investments programme in Kuwait and elsewhere, Mr Harit Talwar said: "There are basically three or four solid factors behind this. Firstly, the bank has reached out to the NRIs rather than wait for them to come to India to open their accounts and find out details of their accounts. The bank has A/C officers overseas who transact for the NRIs all their banking business in India.

Largest
In Kuwait, Mr Zachariah is available for 2 to 3 weeks every month at the Sheraton Hotel to open NRI accounts and answer all queries.

The bank has a separate NRI business group, which helps to

provide exclusive attention to the NRI business.

"And of course, we provide the best of both the worlds, the Indian and international," remarked Mr Talwar. "We have been in India for over 85 years and understand Indian business very well. And yet we are an international bank, in fact the largest American Bank in the world and we attempt to bring our international expertise and standards of service to the NRI business. This makes us the first choice of NRIs around the world."

Overseas

The bank has various pluses over and above traditional NRI offerings. In addition to Citilife, it has Citinews, a pre-quarterly newsletter. Investment Management Service is a comprehensive service facilitating investment in the Indian capital markets.

When asked why NRIs from non metros in India should bank with Citibank India, Mr Jolly Zachariah said, "It is true we have

branches only in the metros but that is not a hindrance. We are there where the NRIs are — and that is overseas. An NRI is in India only for 30-45 days in a year, he needs a bank which has a representative in Kuwait not in Cochin. The representative should not only be able to open his account in Kuwait, but help him carry out his transactions in India while being at Kuwait. He should also provide him details of his accounts in India as well as Kuwait. The services I provide in Kuwait are provided by my colleagues all over the Gulf. It is because of this that NRIs choose to bank with us."

Supporters

On future plans, Mr Talwar remarked "Our success has been phenomenal. For this we are deeply grateful to all our customers, supporters and well-wishers. We view our NRI business as a long-term business and pledge our services to NRIs in Kuwait and elsewhere. Our aim is not mere deposit figures, but to act as bankers to all NRI families and grow with them."

Shares ease but seem steadier, trade figures hit sterling

NEW YORK, March 25. (Reuters): Wall Street, struggling to stay out of Black Monday's long shadow, edged lower in quiet trading today as a stable dollar calmed nerves somewhat in world stock markets shaken by major declines the day before.

The Bank of Japan came to the rescue of the dollar with aggressive purchases, traders said, helping to ease fears about a sequel to last year's stock market crash. Also helping the dollar was a drop in the British pound, which was sharply lower on poor UK trade data, dealers said.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average eased three points to 2,020 by 11:30 am (1630 GMT). Declines led advances 6-5 on modest trading of 60 million shares.

The dollar opened in New York at 125.87 yen against 125.60 at yesterday's close, while the pound fell to \$1.8290 from 1.8420.

Steady

Despite the dollar's steady trading today, Tokyo stocks were unable to completely shrug off Wall Street's sharp 43.77-point fall yesterday and its Nikkei index lost 154.57 points, or 0.60 per cent, to 25,626.71.

The Financial Times Stock Exchange index in London was down 10.4 in late trading to 1,772.3, adding to the 49-point slide the day before.

Worrying those in the markets with a sense of history was the knowledge that, on the 158th day after the 1929 Wall Street crash, there occurred an even bigger rout. Today was the 158th day

since Black Monday on October 19, 1987. But investors saw the markets weathering this storm.

"I don't think today's market shows a bearish trend," said deputy branch manager Takeshi Murakami of Schroder Securities in Japan.

London was under pressure chiefly because Britain reported a £750 million (\$1.37 billion) current account balance of payments deficit for February that was nearly twice what analysts had forecast.

Rally

The currency dropped in heavy selling, which should help British exports. The pound has climbed in recent weeks, as relatively high British interest rates attracted money to sterling assets, and this aroused fears that export earnings would be cramped.

Brokers around the world meanwhile say the recent rally in stock prices has fizzled out because of investors' underlying worries about the global economy. In many markets, rallies also mean there are fewer bargains to attract big share buyers.

Contract

Wall Street's most-watched blue-chip gauge, the Dow Jones industrial index, hit its post-crash high just a week ago at 2,087.37 after a six-week rally of nearly 200 points.

US brokers said a weakening dollar and inflation fears — as the Opec prepares to take action to mop up a glut that has kept oil prices down — were behind yesterday's steep losses which took

the Dow down to 2,023.87. Oil futures eased today, with the May futures contract down nine cents to \$16.87 a barrel on the New York Mercantile exchange. Gold prices also declined, trading in New York down 1.90 to \$452.40 for April delivery on the commodity exchange.

A key factor steadying the markets today was intervention in the Asian currency market by the Bank of Japan to halt the dollar slide.

The dollar, which fell more than one yen in New York yesterday, plummeted close to the key psychological level of 125 yen in Tokyo today before the Bank of Japan acted.

Market talk that the Federal Reserve, the US Central Bank, was making inquiries about exchange rates, an indication that it, too, would intervene, further propped the dollar.

Cautious

"The market is very cautious about coordinated central bank intervention as the dollar falls toward the psychological support of 125 yen, at which level central banks once bought dollars aggressively," said Norimitsu Takada at Citibank in Tokyo.

Other world markets also declined. Shares in Australia fell across the board, wiping out gains from yesterday. The key Sydney share market index dropped 25.7 points to 1,424.5. French shares fell 1.43 per cent today in early Paris trading and Frankfurt's bourse opened sharply lower.

EEC reaches cooperation accord with Gulf

BRUSSELS, March 25. (Reuters): The European Economic Community said today it had reached a trade and cooperation agreement with Arab states in the Gulf which could eventually lead to a broader free-trade pact.

The EEC's Executive Commission said its negotiators and representatives of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) finalised the accord late last night.

A Commission spokeswoman said it would be signed in June, when ministers from the 12-nation Community and the GCC would issue a declaration on the importance of increasing political cooperation between the two blocs.

Support

The Community was keen to reach an agreement quickly to make a gesture of political support for the GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman — under threat from the Iran-Iraq war.

"To prevent long and difficult negotiations over lowering EEC tariffs against GCC exports of petrochemicals, the Community proposed a modest trade accord as a first stage with talks on a much wider pact to follow.

The first-phase agreement commits the two sides to continue to grant each other most favoured nation status and not to introduce any new tariffs or trade restrictions.

Diplomats said there were certain to be very tough negotiations over the Gulf states' drive to increase their petrochemical exports to Europe.

Women's issues emerge focal point of world poverty conference

Rajiv calls for economic reconstruction

NEW DELHI, March 25. (Reuters): The plight of women in the Third World has emerged as a focal point of an international conference on poverty and development which opened here today.

"There is no way to alleviate poverty without solving the problems of women," said Sally Sontheimer, women's issues coordinator of the Society for International Development.

The Rome-based Sid has organised the four-day conference which has brought 1,500 delegates from governmental and private agencies in more than 50 countries to the Indian capital.

The conference, held by the Sid every three years, was opened by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and Prince Claus of the Netherlands, an honorary Sid advisor.

Gandhi in an address called for a new world order based on disarmament, economic reconstruction and cooperation.

"The task before us is the revival of the world economy, its renewal and its reconstruction. The present international system cannot do this as it is neither just nor even efficient," Rajiv told the delegates.

Sontheimer said the conference had an agenda putting women's at the top and had scheduled several sessions to discuss them.

"We are working out a budget of about half-a-million dollars for funding non-governmental women's groups to help them provide legal aid for women and teach them to be economically self-sufficient," she said.

Several delegates are presenting papers at the conference on how social groups, both govern-

mental and non-governmental, tackled problems that women faced in developing countries.

Malaysian delegate Noeleen Heyzer said in a paper that non-governmental agencies have actively campaigned against brothel owners who kept prostitutes in chains in Thailand and against assault on married women in Malaysia.

Cost

"Because of the social cost, horrors and failures of many revolutions, most socially conscious women are experimenting with new ways in the struggle to break down exploitative social formations," she said.

In Surinam, poverty has forced women into helplessness in rural areas. Siemmen Staphorst, a Finnish delegate, said in a paper, she said they had little control over the sale of agricul-

tural produce or its prices, the paper said.

"Prostitution and drug abuse are increasing among women," Staphorst said, adding many women sought a better life by emigrating to the Netherlands.

Worsened

Indian Women Affairs Minister Margaret Alva in a speech said the status of women in India had worsened over time.

"Her status, through the ages, has declined. Women became illiterate, superstitious and secluded and suffered from many barbarous customs," Alva told delegates.

She noted that widows occasionally were immolated on their husband's funeral pyres in the ancient Hindu custom of sati or young wives murdered, usually by being set afire, because an insufficient dowry was paid.

Reorganisation of petroleum ministry planned

LAGOS, March 25. (Opecna): The Nigerian Ministry of Petroleum Resources has been reorganised and strengthened "to enable it to perform its crucial role of policy development and effective supervision of the oil industry."

The Petroleum Resources Minister, Alhaji Rilwanu Lukman, told a news conference here that the ministry would now have three departments, which would take charge of internal administration, policy and management, and petroleum resources.

According to the minister, the internal administration department will be headed by a secretary for finance and administration, the policy and management department by a secretary for petroleum affairs

and the petroleum resources department by a director of petroleum resources.

He said that the ministry would take over from the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) the responsibility for the petroleum training institute and the petroleum equalisation fund.

Sales

The minister announced that three channels would now be used for disposing of the country's crude oil: joint venture oil producing companies will continue to dispose of their share of crude oil produced under the existing fiscal terms, direct sales of crude oil to refineries and their associated outlets would continue, while crude oil will also be

sold to indigenous and foreign exploration companies which have obtained an oil prospecting licence and completed the minimum seismic data acquisition and drilling programme specified by the Ministry of Petroleum Resources.

Lukman announced that all the existing third-party contracts would be reviewed and "those that do not meet any of the above guidelines will be phased out immediately."

Contracts

All government-to-government contracts would be phased out, he said, adding that increased production allocation would be made to established petroleum products marketing companies in the country to enable

them to meet the domestic needs of countries belonging to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The minister also disclosed that all current offshore processing contracts for domestic consumption would be phased out as soon as the new Port Harcourt refinery came on stream.

Meanwhile, several market analysts said in London today that Opec may need new output cuts to be sure of getting prices back to its benchmark of \$18 a barrel and keeping them there through the summer.

Opec ministers' comments, however, suggest there is still debate in the organisation on whether a glut which has recently depressed prices will persist if output is not cut.

Arab-Swiss trade recovers slightly

GENEVA, March 25. (Kuna): Trade between Switzerland and the Arab world had recovered slightly last year, after contracting sharply in 1986, delegates at the 14th annual meeting of the Arab-Swiss Chamber of Commerce were told yesterday.

Addressing the 180 businessmen, bankers and diplomats who attended the conference, secretary-general of the chamber Elias Attia noted that Swiss exports to Saudi Arabia, the largest Arab market for Switzerland, had increased to 1.07 billion Swiss francs (\$764 million) from 981 million francs (\$701 million) in 1986.

However, this level was still far below the 1985 result of 1.41 billion Swiss francs of exports to the kingdom.

The delegates were told that exports to Syria rose to 120 million francs (\$86 million) from 59 million francs. To Kuwait they rose to 140 million francs (\$100 million) from 111 million francs sales to Iraq rose to 181 million francs (\$129 million) from 163 million francs, to Lebanon to 86 million francs (\$61 million) from 51 million francs.

Swiss exports to the six Gulf Cooperation Council states totalled 1.58 billion francs (\$1.12 billion) last year, from 1.51 billion francs in 1986, and 2.2 billion francs in 1985.

Improved
Imports from the GCC also improved, rising to 290 million francs (\$207 million), from 206 million francs and 415 million francs in the two preceding years.

In highlighting the activities of the chamber last year, Attia recalled that two main events were staged.

The first, in cooperation with the Euro-Arab Chamber of Commerce, was a seminar addressed by Arab League Secretary-General Chedli Klibi

on the use of boycotts in international trade, and the second was a symposium on business prospects in Saudi Arabia attended by industry and Electricity Minister Abdel Aziz Al Zamil.

The chamber was involved in four trade-promotion events this year, he noted.

Activities
In May, there would be a Geneva business seminar on "business opportunities in Tunisia."

In June, the Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consulting would

review its activities and the role of Swiss firms in the region, in a meeting in Zurich.

The seven members of the organisation were Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the UAE and Oman, he observed.

In September, Morocco would be one of the main foreign exhibitors at the Swiss national trade show, and in November a Geneva seminar on Algeria's new economic policies would be held, Attia said.

SHIPPING MOVEMENTS

SHIPS DISCHARGING AT SHUWAIKH PORT AS ON 24.3.88

B.No.	Ship Name	Agent	Tel. No.
3	Croesus	AI Qutub	4747815
4	Ibn Shuhaid	KSA	4843150
5	Pascal	Algh Barber	4842988
9	Pamela-2	Algh Barber	4842988

SHIPS EXPECTED AT SHUWAIKH PORT

ETA	Ship Name	Agent	Tel. No.
24/3	Gu Cheng	Mohd Bahar	2433881
25/3	Maersk Astro	Behbehani	2412085
25/3	Hual Gribute	A Bahar	2459891

SHIPS DISCHARGING AT SHUAIBA PORT

B.No.	Ship Name	Agent	Tel. No.
2	Adonis	Roger	2423642
10	Mercs Colombo	AI Qutub	4747815
12	Al Samie	AI Bader	2433537
18	Al Mirqab	UASC	4843150

SHIPS EXPECTED AT SHUAIBA PORT

ETA	Ship Name	Agent	Tel. No.
24/3	Abu Bassma	Roger	2423642
24/3	Espini	ISA	2441860
25/3	Pamela	Algh Barber	4842988
27/3	Al Inssa	KSA	4843150
1/4	Y S Prosperity	AI Rashed	2422026
2/4	Rhein Express	Mohd Bahar	2433881
4/4	AI Manakh	UASC	4843150
9/4	Torbay	KMMC	2419814
11/4	Dubai	UASC	4843150
15/4	Addiriyah	UASC	4843150

COMPILED BY Alghanim Barber Shipping Co. WLL, PO Box 21708 Safat, Alghanim Industries Bldg, Airport Road, Shuwaikh. Phone 4842988/4843988, extn. 3614/3628.

WORLD STOCK ROUNDUP

SYDNEY, March 25. (Reuters):

Shares closed sharply lower as selling pressure hit all sectors. Early nervousness in industrials caused by Wall Street's yesterday drop spread to other areas. The All Ordinaries index fell 25.7 points to 1,424.5.

TOKYO: Share prices closed lower after Wall Street's 44-point tumble and a faltering dollar. The Nikkei index fell 154.57 to 25,626.71.

HONG KONG: Stocks closed weak but off the day's lows after trading overshadowed by Wall Street's sharp drop. Fears that local banks might raise interest rates added to the fall. The Hang Seng index closed 44.47 points lower at 2,501.93.

SINGAPORE: The market closed moderately lower across the board under some selling pressure and profit-taking. The Straits Times industrial index fell 12.85 to 945.60.

BOMBAY: Share prices recovered selectively in restricted dealings after the exchange authorities doubled daily margins on sales in 18 leading shares, effective immediately.

FRANKFURT: Prices closed sharply lower as large losses in New York and other major centres added to local worries. The Commerzbank index, set at mid-session, fell 44.8 to 1,379.9.

PARIS: Shares ended the continuous session down but above their morning lows in quiet pre-weekend trading.

LONDON: Prices were improving quietly but steadily in late trading after the market fell sharply on UK balance of payments data. At 1530 GMT the FTSE 100 index was down 14.3 at 1,768.4.

NEW YORK: Stocks showed small losses in early trading. The Dow index was unchanged at 2,024.

GOVERNMENT TENDERS

Tender No. MEW/22/47/148-87/88

Tender's internal No. 752/88
Concerned party: Ministry of Elec. & Water
Requirements: Supply & Installation of Al Sahieh 300/132/33/11 K.V. ring main system station
Relevant fee: KD 300/-
Initial guarantee: 2-1/2% of offers value
Closing date: 12:00 noon, Tuesday 3.5.88

Qualified Tenderers:
Siemens Co., Germany — National & Germany Electronics & Electrical Services Co., France — Abdul Aziz Abdul Mohsen Al-Rashed, Mitsubishi Co., Japan — Middle East Electricity Co., Toshiba Co., Japan — Al-Thumaini Trdg. Co., Brown Boveri Co., Germany — Brown Boveri Electrical Kuwait: Asa Co., Sweden — Abdullah Hamad Al-Saqer & Bros., Hitachi Co., Japan — Yousuf Ahmed Al-Ghanim & Sons Co.

Tender No. P/SH/88/89
Tender's internal No. 753/88
Concerned party: Ministry of Public Health

Requirements: Rent of vehicles
Relevant fee: KD 50/-
Initial guarantee: 5% of offers value
Closing date: 12:00 noon, Sunday, 1.5.88

Qualified Tenderers:
1. Yousuf Ahmed Al-Ghanim & Sons Co.
2. Faraj Mijbel Al-Faraj & Bros. Co.
3. Jazirah & Qunini Transportation Co.

4. Al-Mulla Car Rental Co.
5. Khaled Al-Mulla & Partners Co.
6. Hamad Al-Khaled & Bros Trdg. Co.
7. Mustafa Karam Trdg. Est.
8. Sanbouk Cars Rental, Sales & Purchases Est.

9. Abdul Mohsen Abdul Aziz Al-Babtain
10. Abbas Ahmad Al-Shawaf Co.
11. Al-Othman Cars Co.
12. Abed Ali Raheem Est.
13. Safa Contg. Est.

Tender No. MEW/22/4/153-87/88
Tender's internal No. 741/88
Concerned party: Ministry of Elec. & Water

Requirements: Maintenance of street lighting equipment in Highways in Kuwait.
Relevant fee: KD 20/-

Initial guarantee: KD 2300/-

Closing date: 12:00 noon Sunday 24.4.88
Qualified Tenderers:
1. Mudian & Abdul Majeed Trading & Contg. Co.
2. Salem Moh'd Al-Nisaf Electrical Co.
3. Kulaib Trdg. & Electrical Contg. Co.
4. Kaifan Trdg. Co.
5. Khorafi Electrical Works Co.
6. Electrical Projects Co.
7. Yaqzah Trdg. Electrical & Mechanical Contg. Est.
8. National Germany Electronics & Electrical Services Co.
9. National Mechanical & Electrical Works Co. Ltd.
10. Yousuf Ahmad Al-Ghanim & Sons Co.
11. Muhlab Trdg. & Contg. Co.
12. Ali Al Dawailah Est.
13. Fadan Equipment & Electrical Contg. Co.
14. Al Amer Electrical Co.
15. Rabiah Lighting Co.
16. Abdullah Hamad Al Saqer & Bros.

Tender No. AA/MM/46-87
Tender's internal No. 747/88
Concerned party: Public Authority for Agriculture & Fisheries Wealth Affairs

Requirements: Supply of vehicles & different machineries.
Relevant fee: KD 20/-
Initial guarantee: 5% of offers value
Closing date: 12:00 noon Tuesday 26.4.88

Tender No. CT/3983
Tender's internal No. 762/88
Concerned party: Kuwait National Petroleum Co.

Requirements: Annual contract for installation of Electricity & ground cables in the refinery.
Relevant fee: KD 30/-
Initial guarantee: 2-1/2% of offers value
Closing date: 12:00 noon Tuesday, 10.5.88

Qualified Tenderers:
1. National Mechanical & Electrical Works Co.
2. Electrical Projects Co.
3. Gulf Electrical Engineering Co.
4. Instrumentation Installation &

Maintenance Co.

5. Yaqzah Trdg., Electrical & Mechanical Contg. Est.
6. Mudiah & Abdul Majeed Trdg. & Electrical Contg. Co.
7. Al-Adasani Contg. Co.
8. Ali Moh'd Thumian Al-Ghanim Est.
9. Solah Trdg. & Contg. Co.
10. Al Abilah Mechanical & Electrical Services Co.
11. Abdullah Al Hamad Al-Saqer & Bros. Co.
12. Salem Bin Moh'd Al Nisaf Electrical Co.
13. Ali Al Dawailah Trdg. & Contg. Co.
14. Sayed hameed Behbehani & Cons Co.
15. Fadan Gen. Trdg. & Contg. Co.

A pre-tender meeting shall be held on Sunday 17.4.88 at 10.00 a.m. in the Shuaiba Refinery to discuss the tender conditions.

The company representative shall not be allowed to attend the preliminary pre-tender meeting if the bidder fails to notify the Kuwait National Petroleum Company with the names and designations of his nominees according to the Safety & Security conditions applied in the refineries at least two days before the date of the said meeting.

Tender No. SPF/24/87
Tender's internal No. 772/88
Concerned party: Ministry of Public Works

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Whatever happened to Abba?

As the most phenomenal and prolific hit-making machine of recent times, Abba, the Swedish pop group, sold over 250 million records, more than any other group in history, including the Beatles. In a business where come-backs are the norm, the big question is whether the four will ever team up again.

By Mike Hrano

At the height of her fame, Agnetha Faltskog had money tied up in property, oil speculation, importing Polish potatoes, Czechoslovakian glass and Russian combine harvesters.

Today, several years later, she is still a multimillionaire but the wide and varied business ventures have long since gone. So, too, has the reason why they were necessary in the first place. The need to invest the huge amounts earned by one of Sweden's most successful exports of the Seventies — Abba — has disappeared. Instead the striking blonde singer says she is happy "being a little star".

As the most phenomenal and prolific hit-making machine of recent times, the group — Agnetha, Anni-Frid Lyngstad, Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus — launched their career after winning the 1974 Eurovision Song Contest with Waterlo.

They sold more than 250 million records, more than any other group in history, including the Beatles, scored nine No. 1's and eight chart-topping albums in Britain alone. At one point they made more money than Swedish car manufacturers Volvo and became wealthier than Sweden's King Gustav.

Then, in 1980, Benny and

Bjorn's platinum-plated song-writing production line ground to a halt. Amid the break-up of the marriages so much at the group's heart — Bjorn's to Agnetha, Benny's to Frida — the pop world was suddenly left asking "What ever happened to Abba?"

The answer, as Benny points out is: "Nothing. We simply stopped. The situation was that Tim Rice came to Stockholm because he had heard that Bjorn and I were interested in writing for the theatre.

"We decided then that we'd do something together, but we were in the middle of recording the last Abba album at the time, so we told Tim we'd do that first — and then go ahead with a show."

It turned out to be the hit musical Chess. "We really wanted to do it," Benny recalls. "So Bjorn and I talked it over with the girls. They said 'Fine — we can go off and do solo albums.' That was basically what happened to Abba."

Sorry Agnetha, for one, was not sorry to see the end of the group. She has recently recorded her latest album, I Stand Alone, in Los Angeles and has just released a single from it, The Last Time.

For her, Abba is a blur of mixed emotions but she is certain that she never wants to be a big star again. She says: "Being a big star is too much pressure, and I don't like the pressure at



Abba: Bjorn Ulvaeus, Agnetha Faltskog, Anni-Frid Lyngstad and Benny Andersson. In the 70's, the group were top of the pops.

all. I really don't miss the fame and success of Abba. We worked so hard for such a long time. We travelled the world. But in almost every place we visited it was work, work, work. We don't have the chance to see anything.

"I've been to many places, but I've no idea what they were about because we were working at the time — always in a rush. It's nice now to relax for a change."

Since the group split up, blonde Agnetha has not spoken to her former colleagues in Abba. "The only one I've been in touch with during those five years is my ex-husband — because we have two children," she adds.

"We are all very dissimilar. I always felt like the odd one out. Frida and Benny always went to parties — but I'm a country girl at heart. The wild times they enjoyed were not for me."

Instead, Agnetha has spent the past few years living a quiet life as a single mother bringing up two children, Linda, 15, and Christian, 10. She has shunned the limelight and turned down several film offers because they meant posing nude to display what was once described as Europe's "sexiest bottom".

"I didn't find it amusing," she says. "That's not my style. It wasn't because of the children that I said no, it was because I did not want to show myself in the nude other than privately. The lives which me

and my children live are very ordinary — we have a house full of animals and my children's friends — and there was no place for films like that."

Agnetha can remember how Abba used to squabble over arrangements and which songs to sing. And she admits she hated the clothes she was forced to wear. "I cringe now when I look back at the outfits I wore. I never wear skirts now, except for special occasions. I wear jumpers and jeans."

But she has no regrets about choosing to stay in her native Sweden, unlike Bjorn and Frida who both moved to England — partially to avoid paying massive tax bills.

"I wouldn't leave Sweden for all the money in the world," she explains. "Even though it'll probably cost me millions. I only leave when it's absolutely necessary, because I hate flying, but now I know that when I do, then it will be because of all my own work."

"I am now doing what I always wanted to do — writing songs, singing, recording — and being the little star."

career for myself. I knew that I could never do that in Sweden. Everywhere I went, there I was followed and written about."

Yet, while it was all the voices of Agnetha and Frida which gave Abba such distinctive appeal, neither of them has succeeded in matching that popularity on their own. Nor do they wish to.

"The British music scene moves so fast sometimes," Frida admits. "There are times when I feel I am too old for it. If I am no longer young enough at the age of 42, then it is no big deal."

Her former husband Benny, 41, now lives in Stockholm with his second wife, Mona, a television presenter, and their seven-year-old son Ludvig. He still has no idea why Abba were so successful.

"I'm extremely surprised by it even now," he says. "I don't know why it happened to us. I could say it was because of the girls' voices, or that we wrote good tunes and are talented and happen to be Swedish — but that still doesn't account for the enormous amount of records we sold."

"We've tried to analyse it, but there's no way we can. There are at least 50 other groups that worked during that period who were equally talented, made wonderful records and yet they didn't sell half of what we did."

Benny can never see Abba getting back together again.

"The longer the time passes, so it diminishes the chances of that happening. We had ten or 11 years of it all — and it would not feel refreshing to start doing the same thing again."

Instead, Benny and Bjorn aim to satisfy themselves by occasionally working with other artists. The first such project came two years ago in the form of Swedish duo Gemini, made up of brother and sister Karin and Anders Glenmark.

"Every now and then, Benny and I like to make a pop record," says Bjorn. "That's what we did with Gemini. We look back fondly at Abba, but we won't repeat it, that's for sure. We're not trying to do that with other people we work with, either."

Bjorn, 42, moved to a £400,000 mansion in Henley-on-Thames at the end of 1984. When he is not working with Benny on new musical ideas, he likes to spend his time there with his second wife, Lena, and their children.

In his 16-acre plot of land he finds plenty to keep him occupied, a duck pond, vegetable and gardens with greenhouses and a large field for his sheep.

He admits that much simple rural pleasures please him greatly. "I love the lifestyle of the English countryside," he says. "It's very laid back. Coming to Henley was definitely the right move to make."

Aswad jumps nine places to No. 1 spot

LONDON, (AP) — The three-man reggae group Aswad shot to the top of the British pop singles record chart from ninth place last week with their hit single Don't Turn Around.

Crash by the Primitives rose four spots to number 2 while Iron Maiden came in from off the charts to take third place with Can I Play With Madness.

Australian teenager Kylie Minogue slipped a spot into fourth with I Should Be So Lucky while Vanessa Paradis dipped from second to fifth place with Joe Le Taxi.

As well as Iron Maiden, two newcomers moved into the top 10 — Drop The Bomb by Bros to number 7 from number 27, and These Dreams by Heart in ninth place, up from number 13.

Top Ten US

The ten top pop singles, as rated by Cash Box magazine, with last week's positions in brackets:

- (4) Man In The Mirror — Michael Jackson (Epic).
- (1) Never Gonna Give You Up — Rick Astley (RCA).
- (2) Father Figure — George Michael (Columbia).
- (5) Endless Summer Nights — Richard Marx (EMI-Manhattan).
- (6) Out of The Blue — Debbie Gibson (Atlantic).
- (7) Get Outta My Dreams, Get Into My Car — Billy Ocean (Jive-Arista).
- (3) I Get Weak — Belinda Carlisle (MCA).
- (9) I Want Her — Keith Sweat (Vintertainment-Elektra).
- (8) Just Like Paradise — David Lee Roth (Warner-Bros).
- (12) Rocket 2 U — The Jets (MCA).

Top Ten UK

This week's top 10 listings, as compiled by Melody Maker magazine, with last week's positions in parentheses:

- (9) Don't Turn Around — Aswad (Mango).
- (6) Crash — Primitives (RCA).
- (3) Can I Play With Madness — Iron Maiden (EMI).
- (3) I Should Be So Lucky — Kylie Minogue (PWL).
- (2) Joe Le Taxi — Vanessa Paradis (Polydor).
- (7) Love Is Contagious — Taja Sevelle (Reprise).
- (27) Drop The Bomb — Bros (CBS).
- (10) Ship of Fools — Erasure (Mure).
- (13) These Dreams — Heart (Capitol).
- (1) Together Forever — Rick Astley (RCA).

And in New York, Michael Jackson leaped to the number 1 spot on the pop singles record charts in the United States with Man In The Mirror. The new hit was in fourth place a week ago.

Jackson's jump nudged Rick Astley's Never Gonna Give You Up into second spot from the top of the Cash Box magazine chart. George Michael's Father Figure dipped one notch to third.

As for the country-and-western singles, The Judds took

over the top of the Cash Box magazine chart with Turn It Loose. Ricky van Shelton's Life Turned Her That Way was second, and Reba McEntire's Love Will Find Its Way To You was third.

Top Ten US

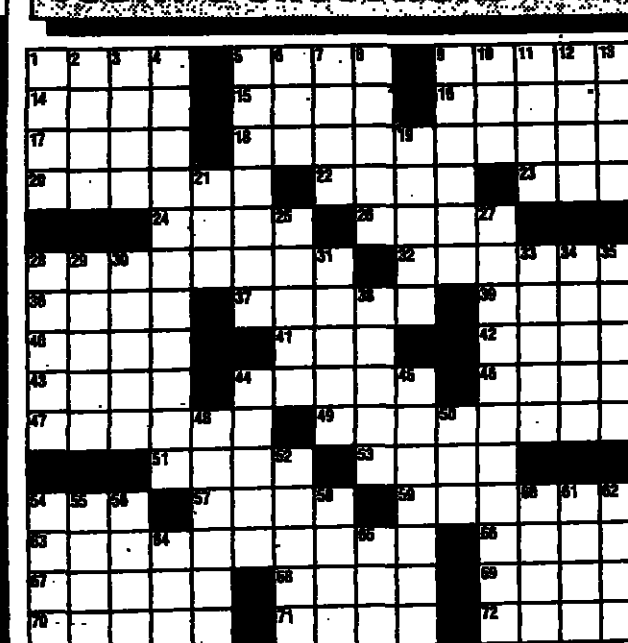
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- (9) I Want Her — Keith Sweat (Vintertainment-Elektra).
- (8) Just Like Paradise — David Lee Roth (Warner-Bros).
- (12) Rocket 2 U — The Jets (MCA).

The ten top country-western singles, as rated by Cash Box magazine, with last week's positions in brackets:

- (3) Turn It Loose — The Judds (RCA).
- (1) Life Turned Her That Way — Ricky van Shelton (Columbia).
- (6) Love Will Find Its Way To You — Reba McEntire (MCA).
- (5) Touch and Go Crazy — Lee Greenwood (MCA).
- (2) Shouldn't It Be Easier Than This — Charley Pride (16th Avenue).
- (8) I Wanna Dance With You — Eddy Rabbit (RCA).
- (11) Famous Last Words Of A Fool — George Strait (MCA).
- (10) Strangers Again — Holly Dunn (MTM).
- (9) Santa Fe — The Bellamy Brothers (MCA-Curb).
- (19) I'll Always Come Back — K.T. Oslin (RCA).

TODAY'S CROSSWORD



- ACROSS**
- Questions
 - Togs
 - Gardener's bane
 - Stead
 - "— a man—"
 - Tropical climber
 - Shake —
 - Soft-soaps
 - Beethoven's "Moonlight —"
 - Before chute or trooper
 - Sound of disapproval
 - Intervent
 - Nonclerical
 - Humbly
 - Long-handled racket used in a field game
 - Freshwater mussel
 - Regrettable
 - Cashews
 - Costa —
 - FDR's Blue Eagle org.
 - Ziegfeld and namesakes
 - Proofreader's word
 - Wolflike animal
 - Lamb
 - A Brewer
 - Finesse
 - Jackknife
 - Orient
 - Parts of days, for short
 - Bog product
 - d'hotel
 - Cloying
 - Unwritten
 - Pocahontas's state
 - the boards (acted)
 - Leningrad's river
- DOWN**
- Canary's cousin
 - Olympian goddess
 - Detected
 - Remark
 - Granary
 - Sharp
 - Made less objectionable
 - Overcomes hostility
 - Labor org.
 - Recondite
 - Terrific bargain
 - Star in Aquila
 - Entertainer Zadora
 - Have done with
 - Signs
 - Secretary
 - Spencer of film
 - Chinese mystical word
 - Tropical tree
 - Frivolous offerings
 - Be as full as possible
 - Merge
 - More kindhearted
 - Slipped up
 - Roman dictator: 82-79 B.C.
 - Forbear
 - Emerson opus
 - Rajah's lady
 - "— good day!"
 - Shaded walk in the Southwest
 - Bottle for carbonated water
 - "— rose — G. Stein, 50"
 - Fifth largest planet
 - Sale caveat
 - Formed
 - Cicatrix
 - Flag
 - Sandarac, for one
 - Carry on
 - Verve
 - Fraternity letter
 - Neither's partner

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

FILOSOPHY SIRS ANAB
LITTLE PILES COLA
ETHAN OPEN TOWS
WHATSCOOKIN SHE
ERRS PORTAL
BESIDE TETER
IRON WIEN ELIOT
LAWLESS OSSICLE
ETHEL ISLA EKES
ATTEST LASSOS
WATSON ABED
ABS WELCOMEMATT
DONE MOKO PATIO
EVEN YOUR TITLE
SEWS MPS SLUES

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN AND OMAR SHARIF

FLOUTING A CARDINAL RULE

Neither vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ K 9 8 3 2
♥ J 3
♦ Q 2
♣ K 10 8 4

WEST
♠ 7 5
♥ A K 10 5
♦ J 10 8 5 4
♣ Q 3

EAST
♠ J
♥ Q 8 7 6 4
♦ K 7 6 3
♣ J 5 2

SOUTH
♠ A Q 10 6 4
♥ 9 2
♦ A 9
♣ A 9 7 6

The bidding:

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: King of ♥

When, as young men, we ventured forth into the wide world, we were given the following admonition: "Never bet against a man who tells you that the jack of spades is going to pop out of the pack and squirt water in your face; and never give a ruff-and-suff!" The first bit of advice has stood us in good stead over the years. We began to have reservations about the latter when we came across this hand.

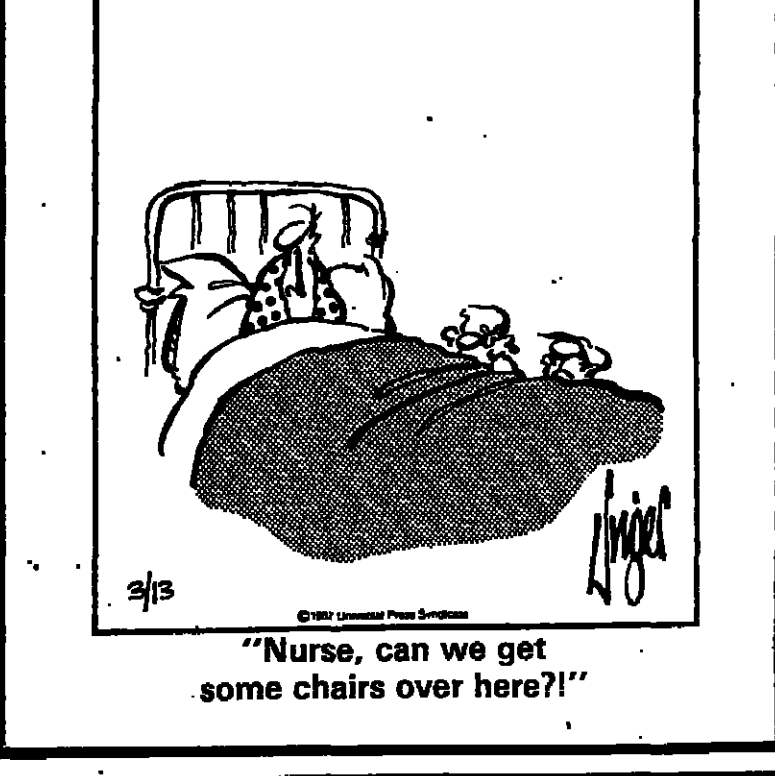
After South's third-hand one spade opening bid, North was on the borderline of a raise to game.

However, he adopted a slightly conservative pose in case his partner had opened light in third seat. South had more than enough to proceed to four spades.

The defenders got off to a fast start when West cashed two high hearts and then shifted to the jack of diamonds. South tried the queen from dummy just in case, but East covered with the king and declarer won. With a sure loser in diamonds and a near certain club loser, declarer's best hope was for a defensive miscue.

Declarer drew the outstanding trumps and then surrendered a diamond trick as East followed with the three to show an original holding of four cards in the suit. Aware that a red-suit lead would yield a ruff-suff, West shifted to a club. He chose the queen, to make it look as if he held the jack as well. Declarer, however, elected to play for split honors. He won in dummy with the king and ran the eight to bring home his contract.

Since declarer was marked with a 5-2-2-4 distribution, West should have realized that one discard from either hand would not help declarer. Instead of breaking the club suit, West should have conceded a ruff-suff, and declarer would still have had to lose a club trick for down one.



"Nurse, can we get some chairs over here?"

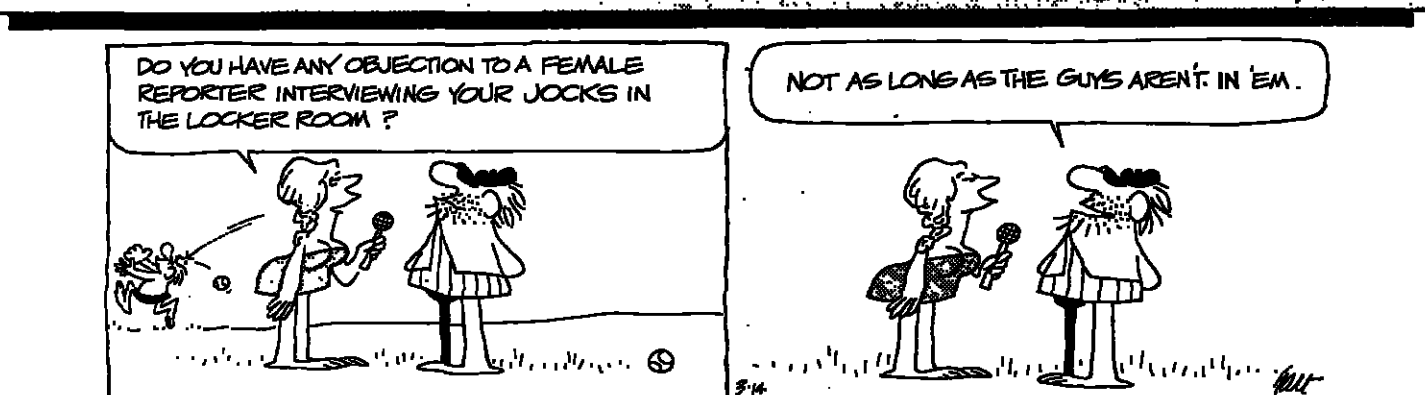
THE WIZARD OF ID

By Brant Parker and Johnny Hart



B.C.

By Johnny Hart



YOUR STARS

Aries (March 20 - April 18)

You should not try to adopt too fast a pace. Try to keep your temper under better control. Have little more patience. Be generous.

Cancer (June 21 - July 21)

The Moon's influence will tend to make you a little more irritable. You should avoid getting into any kind of argument. Do your best to maintain a proper balance between reason and emotion. Be fair.

Libra (Sept. 22 - Oct. 22)

You should try to avoid contradicting yourself. You would do well to avoid jumping to conclusions. Do not allow yourself to be invaded by negative thoughts. Be cordial.

Capricorn (Dec. 22 - Jan 19)

You should avoid being a busybody. You must make sure you do not engage in idle chatter. You will have to beware of making a fool of yourself. Be reasonable.

Taurus (April 19 - May 19)

You would do well to show just a little more goodwill. Make sure you do not get out of practice. It would be better for you to do things personally. Be hopeful.

Leo (July 22 - Aug. 21)

You will tend to be a little on the nervous side. Try not to make a nuisance of yourself. Your personal situation will not be as serious as you had feared it might be. Be tolerant.

Scorpio (Oct. 23 - Nov. 21)

You will have good reason to be pleased with yourself. You should consider a change carefully before making it. A lot depends on you and your reactions. Be a little more reticent.

Aquarius (Jan. 20 - Feb. 18)

The situation is a little uncertain and complicated. You should not take everything quite so literally. Make sure you do not overture yourself. Be a little more considerate.

Gemini (May 20 - June 20)

You will be able to overcome a problem that has been bothering you. You will be able to obtain better results than of late. Make sure you do not have a late night. Be more bold but not arrogant.

Virgo (Aug. 22 - Sept. 21)

You will be in rather high spirits and should try to control yourself. You will meet someone very much to your liking. Avoid spending more than you can really afford. Be sensible.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 - Dec. 21)

You should be a little more selective about what you watch on television. You will be able to deal with a problem that has been bothering you. You should not do anything provocative. Be amenable.

Pisces (Feb. 19 - March 19)

The Moon's better influence will help you to deal with a personal problem. You should spend a little more time on keeping things clean. Do not expect to be loved for yourself alone. Be serene.

ARAB TIMES Classifieds

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2420352 (Res.)

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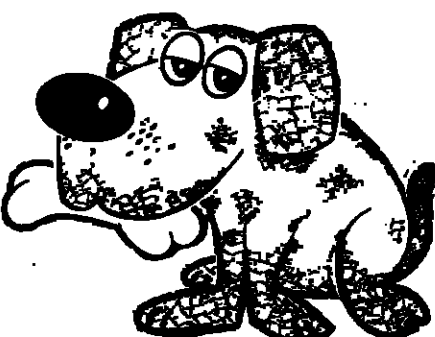
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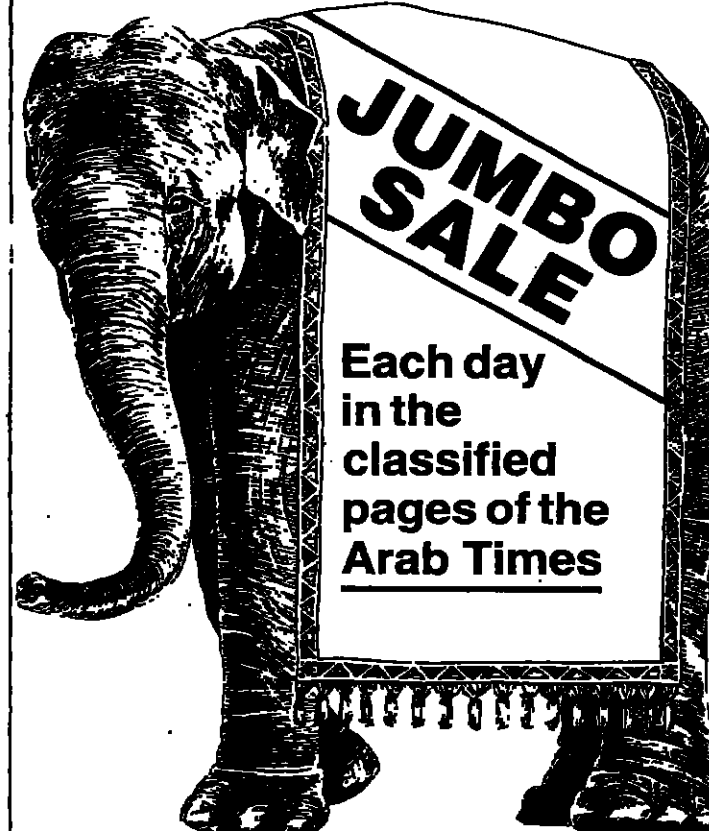
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ARAB TIMES

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DUTCH SHINE AT WEMBLEY

England rally to hold Netherlands



Gullit controlled the game

LONDON, March 25, (Reuters): England were forced to dig deep into the traditional reserves of stamina and spirit to salvage some pride on Wednesday when they fought back to draw 2-2 with the Netherlands in an eventful European Championship warm-up match at Wembley.

After taking a 13th minute lead through striker Gary Lineker's 24th goal in 28 international appearances, England were outplayed and outclassed for an hour as the Dutch cruised into a 2-1 lead with an own goal by Tony Adams and a brilliant header by John Bosman.

Pattern With sweeper Ronald Koeman and European Footballer of the Year Ruud Gullit controlling the pattern of the game at their leisure, the Dutch — who meet England in the opening round of the finals in West Germany in June — earned comparisons with their great 1974 and 1978 teams as they interchanged passes and positions with bewildering effect.

But the departure of Gullit with a calf strain after 62 minutes

severely upset their rhythm and enabled England to respond promptly with an unexpected equaliser by Adams only one minute later.

The goal may have saved some individual face for Adams, but it did little to hide the fact that he and the England defence had been frequently outmanoeuvred by a Dutch side who were superior on the night and close to gaining a first victory by a visiting team since the Soviet Union triumphed in June 1984.

England made a powerful opening and took the lead during a spell of early pressure when Gary Stevens hit a long ball forward for Lineker. The England striker ran clear of two challenges to score with a low shot beyond Hans van Breukelen.

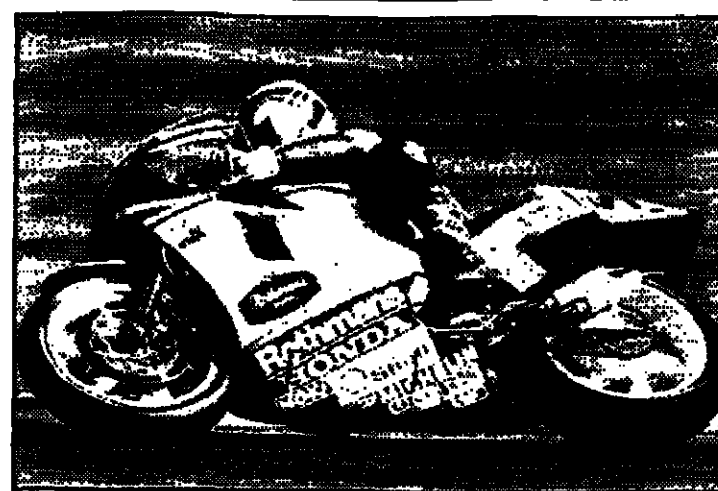
The Netherlands gradually raised their tempo and drew level six minutes later when one of several penetrating long passes by Koeman sent midfielder Jan Wouters into space in the penalty area. His well-struck cross was aimed for Gullit but Adams moved in only to divert into his own net.

The second Dutch goal came from a similarly impressive combination of accurate passes starting with Koeman. His initial pass reached Gullit, who controlled the ball with his head, turned and found Berry van Aerle on the right. His cross to the near post was headed powerfully past Peter Shilton by Bosman.

England's hopes of mounting a revival were hit by the departure of Peter Beardsley after half an hour. He was replaced by Mark Hateley, who made little impression on the Dutch defence despite their dislike of high crosses in front of goal.

Winger John Barnes raised England's hopes with one dazzling run which forced Sonny Filooy into a desperate late tackle, but the Netherlands remained in control, with Gullit creating a glorious opening which was wasted by Wouters before he limped off.

Adams levelled the scores with a glancing header from a Trevor Steven free-kick before a rash of substitutions effectively ended the serious value of the contest.



Gardner faces tough challenge in Japan

SUZUKA, Japan, March 25, (Reuters): World 500cc motorcycle champion Wayne Gardner faces a battle against the weather as well as his opponents in Sunday's Japanese Grand Prix, this year's opening race.

Gardner, the first Australian to win the crown, scored a run-away victory in the championship last season, finishing 20 points ahead of his closest rival, Randy Mamola of the United States.

Troubles 1986 world champion Eddie Lawson of the United States, whose Yamaha was plagued with mechanical troubles throughout last season, finished in a disappointing third place, one point behind compatriot Mamola.

But Gardner recorded all his seven victories on dry surfaces and his less distinguished performances in three Grand Prix events in the rain highlighted his recurring problems in the wet.

Today's first practice runs were held in a light drizzle and weathermen predicted another day of rain tomorrow with prospects of better weather on Sunday.

The 26-year-old Australian, though, remains favourite to win the season's opening event at this 5.9 km extended figure-of-eight course in western Japan.

"We will give it our best shot," a confident Gardner told Reuters after a few tests runs on his new machine. "I want to win

more than seven this year, but the most important thing is the championship."

Japan's Tadashiko Taira finished today's official practice first with the fastest time of two minutes 32.007 seconds, followed by Lawson and American Kevin Schwantz. Gardner finished fourth.

Two more rounds of official practice are scheduled for tomorrow.

Gardner, who was recently voted Australia's Sportsman of the Year, predicted that Sunday's race would be a battle between himself, Lawson, Briton Niall MacKenzie and possibly Didier de Radigue of Belgium.

Lawson's up-and-coming Yamaha team-mate. He was non-committal when asked how he thought Mamola, who switched from Yamaha to the Italian Cagiva machine this season, would do in the race. Cagiva is the only European maker to challenge the dominating Japanese manufacturers.

Retirement

Three times world champion Freddie Spencer, who earlier this month announced his retirement because of chronic tendinitis of his right wrist, said Gardner could well better last year's performance of winning seven out of the 15 races.

"Wayne's in a great position. He may do even better this year," Spencer told Reuters before the test runs.

Al Hajri shrugs off Kuwait decision

QATAR'S Saeed Al Hajri has shrugged off the protest that cost him victory in the Kuwait International Rally and said this week that he will go all-out to win all remaining rounds in the 1988 Fisa Middle East Championship, starting with the Rothmans Rally in June.

"It is ironic in many ways," he said. "I lost the first round in Qatar with a two punctures just before the rally finished. Now I've lost in Kuwait after the rally ended!"

Driving the Rothmans Audi Quattro, Al Hajri and navigator Steve Bond won all but three of the special stages in Kuwait and took it easy over the last sections to finish more than a minute ahead of Dubai's Mohammed Bin Sulayem in the Toyota Celica turbo.

The Qatari explained how that result was reversed: "Early on the second day we entered a time control 15 seconds early by mistake after the marshal had said we were exactly on time. He then said he had got the time wrong, but there was no talk of a penalty then."

Cost

"After the rally had finished, the Toyota team entered a protest which was upheld and we were penalised two minutes. It was these two minutes that cost us the rally. If we had been told at the time, we went on, 'we could have made up the lost minutes quite easily. After all, we had taken one minute off Mohammed on two stages alone."

"That's not the way any team should try to win, by a minor technicality," added the Rothmans star. "No team should want to win that badly."

Al Hajri said that he was now even more determined to win the Championship. "Despite these results, we have proved that the Rothmans Audi Quattro is the better car, a huge improvement on the Porsche I drove for the past few years. We were never really able to match the Toyota Celica."

"Even in Kuwait, Mohammed had an advantage of nearly one-and-a-half minutes on the very first stage when the Audi stopped dead with an electrical fault. We had no difficulty overtaking him and I'm satisfied that we were the easy winners on competitive times."

Budd temporarily withdrawn from world events

AUCKLAND, March 25, (Reuters): South-African born runner Zola Budd has been temporarily withdrawn from international athletics, the sport's governing body said today.

John Holt, general secretary of the International Amateur Athletics Federation, told a news conference Budd would not be allowed to run until an IAAF conference next month considered her eligibility to run for Britain.

"This is a temporary withdrawal, it is not a suspension," Holt told journalists attending the World Cross-country Championships.

Boycott Budd, who is alleged to have violated IAAF rules by taking part in events last year in South Africa, was forced to withdraw from the championships last week under pressure from the IAAF after a threatened boycott from African nations.

Holt said that while Budd may not have taken part in a race in South Africa, as had originally been thought, her mere presence at a meeting in the racially-segregated republic was an infringement of IAAF regulations.

Arthur Eustace, an IAAF council member, also indicated that Budd might take the case of her eligibility to court.

Argentina leave for Europe

BUENOS AIRES, March 25, (Reuters): Argentina's world champion soccer squad yesterday headed for West Germany and a four-way friendly soccer clash with the local team, the Soviet Union and Sweden.

Argentine coach Carlos Bilardo said shortly before leaving it would be very difficult to replace midfielder Jorge Burruchaga, who plays for Nantes of France and was not available.

Forward Jorge Valdano, who has played for Real Madrid, also will not make it to the tournament. Bilardo said Valdano's absence will not be noted as much as Burruchaga's due to tactical adjustments.

"But it is clear that the fact that they will not be there hurts us because along with (Diego) Maradona, these are the men who make our goals," Bilardo said.

Maradona, the team captain, would lead the Argentine squad along with defender Jose Luis Brown, both playing for European clubs.

The squad Bilardo took from Argentina included goalies Nery Pumpido and Luis Islas, defenders Oscar Ruggeri, Pedro Monzon, Oscar Garre, Nestor Clausen and Luis Cuciuffo, midfielders Julio Olarticoechea, Sergio Batista, Ricardo Giusti, Pedro Troglio and Dario Sivisky and forwards Hernand Diaz, Claudio Caniggia, Luis Rodriguez and Oscar Dertycia.

Argentina is scheduled to play the Soviet Union in its first match in the tournament on March 31. The winner of that match would play the winner of the match between West Germany and Sweden on April 2.

If Argentina faced West Germany, it would be their second meeting since Argentina beat the West German squad 3-2 in the final of the 1986 World Cup. Argentina beat West Germany 1-0 in a clash in Argentina last December.

Bilardo said one of the main problems he faces for a tournament like the West Berlin friendly is keeping the players concentrated on the subject in the period of preparations.

He said many players spend all their time talking of transfers to foreign clubs. He said at least seven of the players he is taking to Europe could be transferred to European clubs by the 1990 World Cup.

The coach said the Soviet Union would be a very difficult rival.

"They have a tactical set-up similar to ours," he said. Bilardo added the Soviets have an advantage over Argentina in that they have had a string of matches recently while Argentina's most recent match was last December.

Ireland cruise past Romania

DUBLIN, March 25, (Reuters): David Kelly proved a headache for Romania setting up several scoring chances and claiming a goal in the dying seconds as Ireland extended their unbeaten international run to seven matches with a 2-0 win in a friendly on Wednesday.

But manager Jack Charlton, preparing his side for the European championship finals, had little chance to assess his players against a Romanian side lacking many top players.

All 10 players from 1986 European Cup champions Steaua Bucharest initially selected for the Dublin match were withdrawn in an apparent protest against a vicious tackle by Glasgow Rangers player-manager Graeme Souness in this season's Cup competition.

Cameroun and Nigeria reach final

CASABLANCA, March 25, (Reuters): Cameroun will meet Nigeria in the final of the African Nations Soccer Cup after beating Morocco 1-0 on Wednesday in a bruising semifinal filled with tension and controversy.

The host nation and favourites dominated an untidy match, but Cameroun stunned the crowd with ten minutes remaining when Cyrille Makanaiki rifled a low shot home beyond the reach of goalkeeper Baddou Zaki.

Nigeria booked its place in the final in equally dramatic fashion, ousting Algeria 9-8 in a penalty shootout after a 1-1 draw and extra time.

The first 15 minutes in the electric atmosphere of Casablanca's Mohammed V stadium set the tone for the Morocco-Cameroun semifinal. Moroccan forward Mouahid Hassan was stretched off the field after an off-the-ball incident with veteran Cameroun striker Roger Milla. Milla himself was carried off midway through the second half after a clash with Morocco's Mustapha El Biaz.

Cameroun captain Emile Mpenzi, who took over a free kick and was shown the yellow card — the first of many — by a Mauritanian referee who several times came close to losing control



Morocco's El Hadaoui (2nd left) pushes Cameroun's Kana Andre after Hassan (on the ground) was hit in the head. (Reuters wirephoto)

of a messy and often brutal game. In the Algeria-Nigeria game the score was opened at the 39th minute when the ball bounced off Algerian defender Abderrazak Belgherbi into his own net to make a goal for Nigeria.

The equaliser came at the 88th minute when Algerian striker Rachid Maatar headed it home at close range.

After half an hour of extra time

with no more goals, all eleven players on each side had to try to beat the opposing goalkeeper before the key was found to unlock the stalemate in Nigeria's favour.

Finally, as the entire penalty process began for a second time, Algerian midfielder star Lakhdar Belloumi saw his shot saved by Nigerian keeper Peter Rufai.

As Belloumi held his head in

his hands, the Nigerians in the crowd yelled with joy. Nigeria appear in the final on Sunday for the first time since 1980 when they last won the Cup.

The Green Eagles, who had come to Morocco as the underdogs, looked like giving the match away when their defence panicked during a prolonged spell of second half pressure from Algeria.

Ardiles and Francis find new soccer clubs

LONDON, March 25, (Reuters): Ossie Ardiles and Trevor Francis, two of soccer's most gifted performers, find themselves with new clubs as the English League programme moves into its most vital phase tomorrow.

Ardiles, 35, is expected to go straight into Blackburn Rovers' Second Division promotion clash at Plymouth, providing he has recovered from yesterday's hectic dash from Tottenham to beat the transfer deadline.

Francis, who was among the game's earliest £1 million (\$1.84 million) players, has joined First Division Queens' Park Rangers from Glasgow Rangers on a free transfer.

Blackburn manager Don Mackay believes that with the help of Ardiles the club, currently second, can return to the First Division after a 17-year absence.

France defeat tough Spain

BORDEAUX, France, March 25, (Reuters): France rediscovered some of the flair which had deserted them since the 1986 World Cup when they beat Spain 2-1 in a soccer friendly on Wednesday.

France, who captured the European Championship crown when they last encountered Spain in the 1984 final, might have earned the right to defend their title this year if they had played their qualifying matches with the verve they showed in Bordeaux.

With nothing at stake, they played with a freedom which had disappeared from their game since the departure of Michel Platini and earned their win over a tenacious Spanish side who will challenge in West Germany in June for the European title vacated by the French.

France started inauspiciously when central defender Yvon le

Roux blundered in the sixth minute with a mistimed back pass to goalkeeper Joel Bats, who conceded a penalty by upending striker Jose Maria Bakero as he seized possession and burst into the area.

Miguel Gonzalez Michel hit the spot-kick straight at Bats and the ball cannoned off the goalkeeper's legs only to be deflected by defender Sylvain Kastendeuch into the path of the advancing Ramon Caldera, who shot into the net.

Volleyed But three minutes later France were level when Gerald Passi leapt to score with a glancing header from a perfectly-flighted cross from the right by Dominique Bijotat.

Spanish goalkeeper Andoni Zubizarreta, rooted to his line as the ball flashed to his right, had attempted to punch the ball clear but found Bijotat instead, and a

similarly doomed manoeuvre led to the most spectacular goal of the night.

This time French captain Luis Fernandez met the clearance with a volleyed scissor kick from 25 metres out in front of goal which left Zubizarreta grasping air as he dived vainly to his right.

Michel came within an ace of levelling the score shortly after the interval when a long-range snap-shot twanged against the French goalkeeper's left upright.

But France were soon back on the attack, prompted on the left flank by inventive full-back Manuel Amoros and combining well in midfield with Passi, Fernandez, Bijotat and newcomer Jean-Philippe Durand.

Bakero and Emilio Butragueno likewise posed problems for the French defence, with Caldera, Michel and captain Rafael Gordillo in effective support.

Wilander to face Noah in semifinals

Graf and Evert crush opponents for final

KEY BISCAINE, Fla., March 25, (Reuters): top-seeded Steffi Graf of West Germany defeated unseeded American Stephanie Rehe 6-3 6-1 yesterday to reach the final against Chris Evert at the \$2.1 million International Players Championships.

Earlier in the day, Evert, ranked third in the world, eliminated compatriot American Mary Joe Fernandez 6-2 6-1. Fernandez had beaten third-seeded Gabriela Sabatini of Argentina.

Breaking

Rehe, 34th in the world, took a 2-0 lead in the first set by breaking Graf in the first game of the match, but the 18-year-old West German broke back in the fourth game for 2-2. The two both held serve easily to 3-3.

Graf won her serve at 4-3 with a blistering forehand winner and took control of the match. Including that game, the defending champion won 10 of the last 11 games of the match as Rehe began having trouble with Graf's powerful groundstrokes.

Graf lifted her game going into the second set as she dominated eight of the first nine points of the set with her aggressive play. She repeatedly produced winners throughout the second set off Rehe's weak second serve.

Graf, who had beaten Rehe in their three previous meetings, said that the turning point of the match was when she won her serve at 3-3 and then began to attack Rehe's serve.

"I think I picked up my game then (at 3-3). I started stepping into my forehand, and she wasn't getting to the ball as well. She was aggressive in the beginning, but then her serve hurt her," Graf said.

Evert, who lost to Graf in the final of the Australian Open, outlasted Fernandez, 20th in the world, from the baseline and wore down the 16-year-old by running her from side to side.

Evert said that she tried to lure Fernandez to the net because the teenager was having trouble with Evert's pinpoint passing shots.

"When she came to the net, she made a couple of good shots, but her volley isn't that good," said Evert. "I kept passing her. It was easier to win points when she was at the net. I used my drop shots to pull her in."

Graf has beaten Evert the last five times they have played, including a 58-minute rout here in the semifinals last year. Evert won the first six meetings.

On Wednesday evening, Jimmy Connors, searching for his first tournament victory in



Evert smashes the ball back to Fernandez. (Reuters wirephoto)

more than three years, reached the semifinals with a straight-set victory over Sweden's Anders Jarryd.

Top-seeded Mats Wilander of

Sweden crushed unseeded American Aaron Krickstein 6-1 6-2 6-0 to make the semifinals against sixth-seeded Yannick Noah of France, who beat

Andrei Chernomkov of the Soviet Union 6-1 6-4 6-4.

The second-seeded Connors, who has not lost a set in this tournament, beat seventh-seeded Jarryd 7-5 6-3 6-1.

Connors will face third-seeded Czechoslovak Miloslav Mecir, who suffered a lapse in concentration but still beat American Jay Berger 6-1 2-6 6-3 7-6.

Connors repeatedly attacked behind his punishing groundstrokes to keep Jarryd on the defensive throughout the match. The 35-year-old American struggled in the first set as the two traded breaks twice.

Sweeping

Connors raced to a 3-0 lead in the second set to take control of the match, sweeping six of the last seven games as Jarryd seemed disheartened.

"I don't worry as much about the results. I just go out and play my game of tennis," said Connors, who won his last tournament in Tokyo in October, 1984.

"Tonight, the pace in the first set was very fast. It was good tennis, something the crowd could sink its teeth into. That's what's important," said Connors.

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SPORTS

LOCAL CRICKET

Casuals poor run continues

CASUALS failed to improve on their recent poor run in the Rahim League when they were beaten by Hawks at Ahmadi on Thursday.

Casuals opening bowlers Anderson and Snowden tried their utmost to make inroads into the Hawks batting, knowing that the remainder of their strike force were not playing.

The extra effort almost paid dividends as wickets started to tumble. Snowden claimed three and was unlucky not to reap further reward. Anderson was similarly unfortunate and his accurate pace helped keep the run-rate down.

Injuring

Things were beginning to look good for the Casuals as Earnest took two splendid catches, badly injuring his hand during one.

However when Ashraf came to the wicket the game slipped away. A hard-hit 72 not out by Ashraf, aided by Sarwar (37) and Nadeem (21), saw Casuals at the receiving end. Hawks finished on 176 for eight in their allotted overs.

In reply, Casuals found that they could not match the required run-rate. Wells (11) and Tudball (42) looked out of touch. Clements (29) shone briefly and Snowden (6) was unluckily adjudged stumped while Dubrey (14) entered the contest too late to affect the result.

New Zealand yacht takes to the water

AUCKLAND, March 25, (Reuters). The 1988 America's Cup moved out of the courtroom to the water yesterday when New Zealand's radical challenger underwent its maiden trial on Auckland harbour.

The five-hour workout was deemed a great success by the syndicate set to challenge the San Diego Yacht Club for yachting's most prestigious trophy off California in September.

"Everything that should have gone up went up, and nothing that shouldn't have come down came down," one member of the syndicate told Reuters.

Michael Fay, chairman of the challenge committee, was on board as the 130-foot New Zealand slipped out of its closely-guarded dock at Devonport naval base at dawn.

Secret

The exercise, aimed at sorting out positions for the 40-strong crew and testing the sails ahead of Sunday's official launch, was supposed to be secret.

But as the massive New Zealand, with its distinctive winged hull, chugged under motor through Waitemata harbour it was met by a fleet of small craft and four helicopters carrying journalists from around the world.

David Barnes, helmsman of the New Zealand yacht which won last year's 12-metre challenge in Sardinia, and American-born Rod Davis took turns at the helm as the largest America's Cup yacht to be built in 50 years was put through its paces, albeit gently.

After 80 minutes the mainsail was set on the slightly curved winged mast.

This was followed by a jib and a gennaker, two of around 20 sails designed by Tom Schnackenberg for the carbon-fibre vessel.

Mayweather retains title

LOS ANGELES, March 25, (Reuters). American boxer Mayweather used his favourite weapon — the right hand — to knock out Mauricio Acceves of Mexico in the third round and retain his World Boxing Council super lightweight title yesterday.

Mayweather, making his first defence of the 140-pound title he won last November, put the ninth-ranked Acceves down twice — once in the first round and finally in the third round of the scheduled 12-round bout.

Each time it was the right hand that did the damage.

Connected

The end came midway through the third round when the champion connected with a lightning-quick left-right combination to the head.

Acceves, 25, staggered sideways into the ropes before falling to the canvas. He lay propped up against the ropes, making no attempt to rise, as referee Chuck Hasset of the United States counted him out at one minute, 32 seconds of the third round.

HIRWANI TRIGGERS COLLAPSE

India edge past Sri Lanka

SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, March 25, (Reuters). India's teenage leg-spinner Narendra Hirwani, who captured 16 wickets on his Test debut in January, again played a telling role in the opening match of the Sharjah Cup cricket tournament today.

Hirwani, 19, tilted the balance against Sri Lanka by snapping up Roshan Mahanama and Aravinda De Silva, whose third wicket partnership of 137 had seemingly put their team on course for victory.

The wrist spinner's dismissal of the pair was the start of a collapse in which the last eight wickets crashed for 50, leaving India winners by 18 runs. Sri Lanka were all out for 201 in 49.2 overs in reply to India's 219 for eight in their 50 overs.

Pressed

Sri Lanka, having restricted India to a modest total by combative out-cricketer, pressed home their advantage as Mahanama (51) and Man of the Match De Silva (88) took the score from 14 for two 151.

But Hirwani, whose stunning Test debut performance sent West Indies to a rare defeat, brought India back into contention when he removed both Mahanama and De Silva in the space of three overs.

De Silva batted outstandingly well, hitting one tremendous six, hitting one tremendous six of Hirwani and three fours in a



Hirwani: tilted the balance

flawless innings.

Thereafter, it was a struggle for Sri Lanka and wickets fell regularly as the lower order batsmen failed to achieve a degree of composure, with three players run out.

Earlier, India recovered from a shaky 71 for four thanks largely

to former captain Kapil Dev, who stroked a fluent 48 off only 43 deliveries, including two sixes and three fours.

The feature of the innings was the fine fielding of the Sri Lankans, who caught everything and ran two batsmen out with thrilling pick ups and throws.

Tomorrow is a rest day and the three-nation competition continues on Sunday when New Zealand play India.

Scoreboard

INDIA	K. Srikkanth c Mahanama b Ramanayake	32
	N. Sidhu b J. Ramanayake	17
	M. Amarnath run out	1
	W.V. Raman c Madugalle b A. De Silva	21
	M. Azharuddin b Ramanayake	7
	Kapil Dev c Madugalle b A. De Silva	48
	R. Shastri c Mahanama b Ramanayake	26
	K. More run out	9
	A. Ayub not out	31
	C. Sharma not out	12
	Extras (b-1 lb-7 nb-5 w-2)	15
	Total (eight wickets - 50 overs)	219
	Fall of wickets: 1-31 2-32 3-63 4-71 5-125 6-140 7-152 8-198	

Did not bat: N. Hirwani
Bowling: J. Ramanayake 10-0-34-2, Labrooy 9-0-41-0, Ramanayake 7-0-37-2, Amarnath 10-0-44-0, A. De Silva 9-2-26-2, Ramanayake 5-0-27-0.

SRI LANKA	R. Mahanama b Hirwani	51
	B. Kuruppu c Shastri b C. Sharma	6
	A. Gurusinghe run out	0
	P.A. de Silva b Hirwani	88
	A. Ranatunga c Ashar b Shastri	11
	R. Madugalle c More b Shastri	11
	G. De Alwis c Srikkanth b Kapil	2
	R. Ramanayake run out	4
	C. Labrooy run out	4
	C. Ramanayake run out	11
	D. Amarnath not out	3
	Extras (b-3 lb-10 w-3 nb-1)	17
	Total (49.2 overs)	201

Fall of wickets: 1-14 2-14 3-151 4-158 5-177 6-180 7-181 8-182 9-190
Bowling: Kapil Dev 9-2-26-1, C. Sharma 6-3-19-1, Amarnath 6-0-26-0, Shastri 8-0-40-2, Hirwani 10-1-40-2, Ayub 10-0-37-0

Long jump result fixed, say Italians

ROME, March 25, (Reuters). Italy's Olympic Committee said today the men's long jump at last year's World Championships in Rome had been rigged and called for disciplinary action against eight senior Italian athletics officials.

Olympic Committee (Coni) president Arrigo Gattai announced the decision after Coni's executive board met to consider the results of a two-month inquiry into a 8.38 metre jump which won Italy's Giovanni Evangelisti the bronze medal.

The five-man inquiry concluded unanimously that Evangelisti's jump had been falsely measured as a result of activities "carried out by persons identifiable from the results of the investigation."

Evidence

The board did not say how the measuring was falsified but the inquiry report referred to television and eyewitness evidence that two measuring judges had manipulated the measuring equipment.

Coni recommended disciplinary action against Italian Athletics Federation Secretary-General Luciano Barra, chief coach Enzo Rossi and six other Italian officials, including five judges at the championships.

Evangelisti, who was not involved in the rigging, said in December he would give back his medal because it had lost all meaning for him.

Shoaib hits unbeaten ton

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, March 25, (Reuters). Pakistan, clearly intent on squeezing out as much batting practice as possible, added a further 93 runs for the loss of three wickets on the second day of their four-day cricket match against the West Indies Board XI today.

Shoaib Mohammad, unbeaten on 101 in an overnight total of 269 for three, moved sedately to 150 not out in a total of six hours at the crease.

At the interval, Pakistan were 362 for six.

The three wickets to fall were all in the first hour against the new ball which had been taken late yesterday evening.

Nightwatchman Hafiz Shahid was beaten all ends up by the pace of Ian Bishop and Salim Malik lasted only two balls before Tony Gray moved one away off the wicket to give first slip a straightforward catch.

Ejaz Ahmed, short of runs on the tour, could make only 19 before being taken at first slip off Bishop.

Yesterday Pakistan captain Imran Khan won the toss and opted to bat. His side was given a good start of 91 by openers Mudassar Nazar and Moinul Aftab.

Mudassar survived two chances until he was caught at short leg off Board XI captain Roger Harper on the stroke of lunch for 47, including seven fours.

Moinul Aftab's four innings of 38 in 139 minutes ended when he was bowled by a well-flighted delivery from off-spinner Clyde Butts, a late addition to the side after Robert Haynes twisted an



Shoaib: 150 not out

ankle while practising.

Shoaib and Aamir Malik then combined in a partnership of 146 that at times drew boos from a crowd of about 6,000 because of the lack of enterprise.

Aamir was out to the second new ball after making 51 in 174 minutes. He was leg before to pacer Ian Bishop who experienced run-up problems, sending down 15 no-balls.

The sedate tempo of the match was lifted briefly in the afternoon when fast bowler Tony Gray unsettled Aamir with a series of short-pitched deliveries, one of which hit the Pakistani on the helmet.

Meanwhile West Indies captain Viv Richards, out of action since having an operation on March 13, was named yesterday to lead the team for the first cricket Test against Pakistan in Guyana from April 2.

Richards will travel to Guyana in time for the fifth one-day international on March 30 but is unlikely to play in that match as

the selectors have named opener Gordon Greenidge, who has been leading the team in Richards' absence, as captain.

Fast bowler Malcolm Marshall, who missed all previous four games because of a knee injury, is also among a group of 12 players travelling to Georgetown on March 27 to be available for the international and the Test.

Richards went into hospital after the first one-day match to have an abscess removed.

The others named in the squad for Guyana are Desmond Haynes, Carlisle Best, Gus Logie, Richie Richardson, Jeff Dujon, Courtney Walsh, Patrick Patterson, Winston Benjamin, and Curtley Ambrose.

The players already in Guyana who could be drafted into the squad include Carl Hooper, Phil Simmons, Roger Harper and Anthony Gray.

It was announced yesterday that Pakistani all-rounder Ejaz Faqih, who has only played three Tests since making his debut eight years ago, will arrive in Guyana tomorrow to reinforce Pakistan's injury-ravaged cricket squad.

Late news

THE West Indies Board XI were 82 for three in reply to Pakistan's first innings of 495 for nine declared at close of play on the second day of their four-day cricket match on Friday in Georgetown.

McCumber takes lead

PONTE VEDRA, Fla., March 25, (Reuters). Mark McCumber shot a seven-under-par 65 yesterday to take a one-stroke lead after the first round of the \$1.25 million Players Championship golf tournament.

McCumber, who grew up in nearby Jacksonville, used an eagle three on the par-five ninth hole (his 18th) to assume the lead by one shot over Curt Byrum and Greg Norman of Australia who each posted six-under par 66's.

Brilliant

McCumber had seven birdies, an eagle and two bogeys to post his near record round of 65. His final hole eagle came by virtue of a brilliant 112-yard sand wedge shot that found the bottom of the cup at the 582-yard ninth.

He used only 11 putts on the front nine and only 24 overall for

his brilliant round at the 6,857-yard TPC course.

Norman had an excellent round as well despite a whiff on the par-four fifth hole when he attempted to chip the ball from high rough just off the green. His club actually passed cleanly under the ball and he went on to make a five-foot putt that saved bogey five for him.

Among other foreign players in the field, Australia's Steve Elkington had a two-under-par 70, while countryman Wayne Grady had a 71 along with Japan's Aoki and West Germany's Bernhard Langer.

Defending champion Sandy Lyle of Britain fell of his form, posting a seven-over-par 79 that left him in danger of missing the cut of the low 70 players to be determined this evening.

Alcott shoots record

PHOENIX, Ariz., March 25, (Reuters). Amy Alcott shot a course record 65 yesterday to take a two-shot lead over compatriot American Colleen Walker at the \$350,000 Turquoise Classic women's golf tournament.

Walker's 67 tied the previous record on the 6,404-yard par 73 course.

Americans Mary Beth Zimmerman and Deborah McHaffie were level at 69, and a group of 11 players were at five strokes off

the pace at three-under-par 70 in the battle for the \$52,000 first-place prize.

Alcott sank a 12-foot birdie putt on her final hole to cap a round that included nine birdies and one bogey.

"I have been playing very well since the beginning of the year and have felt I have had this kind of round in me," Alcott said. Alcott started her round on the 10th hole with a birdie from three feet. She had birdies on the third, sixth and seventh holes as well.



Botham appears before Australian cricket inquiry

BRISBANE, March 25, (Reuters). English cricketer Ian Botham, fined for assault and offensive behaviour during a flight in Australia, appeared before a preliminary inquiry into the incident by the Queensland Cricket Association (QCA) today.

The Test all-rounder, on a three-year contract with Queensland, said he was given a "fair hearing" by QCA commissioner Ron Archer but "I don't know what the verdict is."

The 30-minute inquiry session also heard Botham's explanation of a dressing room brawl alleged to have occurred after a cricket match in Tasmania. The Tasmanian Cricket Council (TCC) is also investigating reports of the incident.

QCA secretary Grantley Evans said the executive council of the association was expected to meet on Tuesday night to decide on the allegations.

Botham, smiling and relaxed, told reporters he had "more things to worry about" than what would happen at that meeting. He did not elaborate.

Yesterday Botham said that he was fed up with being told that he must behave well in public.

"What about the public showing me some respect," he said on arrival here from Perth, where a court fined him 800 dollars

(\$590) for using obscene language and attacking a passenger during a domestic flight on March 15.

Botham admitted the offence but said it would not have happened if the passenger had not interfered during an argument he had with Australian team captain Allan Border.

"If that man had kept his nose out of an argument that had nothing to do with him... none of this would have happened," he said.

Botham lashed out at the Australian media for its coverage of the whole episode.

"I'm fed up with all you people. You all read what the prosecutor said. You don't give a stuff what the defence people say. You all jump to conclusions and you're very quick to criticise," he told reporters.

Botham appeared angry when told about calls for action against him by some members of the British parliament.

"British MPs are looking for my sackings? Bullshit."

On Wednesday, Border said he was still good friends with the English test all-rounder.

However, Border said: "I am dismayed at the incidents. We are public figures and I am a bit worried about what those things have done to the image of Queensland cricket."

Top seeds win openers

PARIS, March 25, (Reuters). Top seeds Jan-Ove Waldner of Sweden and Filura Bulatova of the Soviet Union safely negotiated their opening singles matches to reach the third round in the European Table Tennis Championships today.

Defending champions Joergen Persson of Sweden and Csilla Batorfi of Hungary also cleared their opening second-round hurdles without mishap.

Received

Waldner, runner-up to compatriot Mikael Appelgren in 1982, ousted Finland's Matti Seiro 21-14 21-13 21-19 in his initial appearance, having received a bye through the first round like all the top 16.

Bulatova, beaten in the last two European women's singles finals, dropped a game to Poland's Katarzyna Kalinska before winning their second-round encounter 21-18 21-11 17-21 21-14.

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Editor in Chief:
Ahmed Al-Jarrah

Editorial Office:
Airport Road, Shuwaikh.
P.O. Box 2270,
13023 Safat, Kuwait.

Telex:
22332 KT

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